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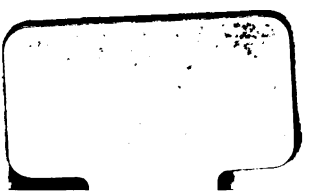

4 Vols

PATRONAGE.

BY

MARIA EDGEWORTH,

AUTHOR OF "TALES OF FASHIONABLE LIFE," "BELINDA," "LEONORA," &c.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

"Above a Patron,—though I condescend
"Sometimes to call a Minister my friend."

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. JOHNSON AND CO.

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

1814.

J. M'Creery, Printer, Black-Horse Court, London.

TO THE READER.

My daughter again applies to me for my paternal *imprimatur*, and I hope, that I am not swayed by partiality, when I give the sanction which she requires.

To excite the rising generation to depend upon their own exertions for success in life, is surely a laudable endeavor; but, while the young mind is cautioned against dependance on the patronage of the great, and of office, it is encouraged to rely upon such friends, as may be acquired by personal merit, good manners, and good conduct.

RICHARD LOVELL EDGEWORTH.

Edgeworth's Town,
Oct. 6, 1813.

TO THE READERS

OF THE

SECOND EDITION OF

PATRONAGE.

I LEARN with dismay, that the characters in this book are supposed to have been drawn from real persons. If any traits of generosity, or of honorable conduct, in these pages are acknowledged by any of our friends to resemble the tenor of their own conduct, we are happy to have added in the smallest degree to that self-satisfaction, which is in this world the best reward of virtue. But I pledge myself, that not one character was taken from any original whatsoever, or was intended to point out any individual.

Statesmen, courtiers, sycophants, intriguers and empirics both abroad and at home, men, who disgrace the most sacred, and dishonor the most useful professions, are to be found in every country, and in every age. The author purposely

introduced such anachronisms as make it impossible to fix the precise time of any particular scene in this fiction.

It has been hinted that a slur has been thrown in *Patronage* upon the conduct of the hospitals in London. The London hospitals are utterly beyond the reach of reproach.—This insinuation we repel with disdain. It is an attack not only upon the common sense, but on the moral character of the writer.——

As to the rest,—In the design of an historical or a fancy-painting accidental likeness may draw upon the painter the imputation of personal satire ——from such a suspicion he has no refuge but in his general character for integrity.

R. L. Edgeworth.

Edgeworth's Town,
Feb. 5, 1814.

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MR. EDGEWORTH'S SPEECHES IN PARLIAMENT.

ERRATA TO VOL. I. OF PATRONAGE.

Page 180, *Line* 3. *After* was finished, *insert* "unknown to Caroline."

For Caroline's, *read* her.

The binder is requested to place these leaves at the beginning of the first volume, after the address To the Reader.

PATRONAGE.

CHAPTER I.

"How the wind is rising!" said Rosamond.—"God help the poor people at sea to night!"

Her brother Godfrey smiled.—"One would think," said he, "that she had an argosy of lovers at sea, uninsured."

"You, gentlemen," replied Rosamond, "imagine that ladies are always thinking of lovers."

"Not *always*," said Godfrey, "only when they show themselves particularly disposed to humanity."

"My humanity, on the present occasion, cannot even be suspected," said

Rosamond, "for you know, alas! that I have no lover at sea or land."

"But a shipwreck might bless the lucky shore with some rich waif," said Godfrey.

"Waifs and strays belong to the lady of the manor," said Rosamond, "and I have no claim to them."

"My mother would, I dare say, make over her right to you," said Godfrey.

"But that would do me no good," said Rosamond, "for here is Caroline, with superior claims of every sort, and with that most undisputed of all the rights of woman—beauty."

"True—but Caroline would never accept of stray hearts," said Godfrey. "See how her lip curls with pride at the bare imagination!"

"Pride never curled Caroline's lip," cried Rosamond—"Besides, pride is very becoming to a woman. No woman can be good for much without it, can she, mother?"

"Before you fly off, Rosamond, to

my mother, as to an ally, whom you are sure I cannot resist," said Godfrey, "settle first, whether you mean to defend Caroline upon the ground of her having or not having pride."

A fresh gust of wind rose at this moment, and Rosamond listened to it anxiously.

"Seriously, Godfrey," said she, "do you recollect how very dangerous our coast is? Do you remember the shipwrecks last winter?"

As she spoke Rosamond went to one of the windows, opened the shutter, and threw up the sash.—Her sister, Caroline, followed, and they looked out in silence.

"I see a light to the left of the beacon," said Caroline.—"I never saw a light there before.—What can it mean?"

"Only some fishermen"—said Godfrey.—"But, brother, it is quite a storm," —persisted Rosamond.

"Only equinoctial gales, my dear."

"Only equinoctial gales! But to

drowning people it would be no comfort that they were shipwrecked only by equinoctial gales. There! there! What do you think of that blast?" cried Rosamond, "is not there some danger now?"

"Godfrey will not allow it," said Mrs. Percy—"He is a soldier, and it is his trade not to know fear."

"Show him a *certain* danger," cried Mr. Percy, looking up from a letter he was writing—"Show him a *certain* danger, and he will feel fear as much as the greatest coward of you all.——Ha! upon my word, it is an *ugly* night," continued he, going to the window.

"Oh, my dear father!" cried Rosamond—"did you see that light?—out at sea?—There! there!—to the left."

"To the east—I see it"—

"Hark! did you hear?"—

"Minute guns"—said Caroline.

There was a dead silence instantly.—Every body listened.—Guns were heard again.—The signal of some vessel in dis-

tress. The sound seemed near the shore, —Mr. Percy and Godfrey hastened immediately to the coast.—Their servants and some people from the neighbouring village, whom they summoned, quickly followed. They found that a vessel had struck upon a rock, and from the redoubled signals, it appeared that the danger must be imminent.

The boatmen, who were just wakened, were surly, and swore that they would not stir, that "whoever she was, she might weather out the night, for that, till day-break, they couldn't get along side of her."—Godfrey instantly jumped into a boat, declaring he would go out directly at all hazards.—Mr. Percy, with as much intrepidity, but, as became his age, with more prudence, provided whatever assistance was necessary from the villagers, who declared they would go any where with him; the boatmen then ashamed, or afraid, of losing the offered reward, pushed aside the *land-lubbers*, and were ready to go.

Out they rowed—and they were soon so near the vessel, that they could hear the cries and voices of the crew. The boats hailed her, and she answered that she was Dutch, homeward bound—had mistaken the lights upon the coast—had struck on a rock—was filling with water—and must go down in half an hour.

The moment the boats came along side of her, the crew crowded into them so fast, and with such disorder and precipitation, that they were in great danger of being overset, which Mr. Percy seeing, called out in a loud and commanding voice to stop several who were in the act of coming down the ship's side, and promised to return for them if they would wait. But just as he gave the order for his boatmen to *push off*, a French voice called out—

"Monsieur!—Monsieur l'Anglois!—one moment."

Mr. Percy looked back and saw, as

the moon shone full upon the wreck, a figure standing at the poop, leaning over with outstretched arms.

" I am Monsieur de Tourville, Monsieur—a charge d' affaires—with papers of the greatest importance—despatches."

" I will return for you, Sir—It is impossible for me to take you now, our boat is loaded as much as it can bear"—cried Mr. Percy—and he repeated his order to the boatman to *push off*.

Whilst Godfrey and Mr. Percy were trimming the boat, M. de Tourville made an effort to jump into it.

" Oh don't do it, Sir!" cried a woman with a child in her arms, " The gentleman will come back for us—for God's sake don't jump into it."

" Don't attempt it, Sir," cried Mr. Percy, looking up—" or you'll sink us all."

M. de Tourville threw down the poor woman who tried to stop him, and he leaped from the side of the ship. At the

same moment Mr. Percy seizing an oar pushed the boat off, and saved it from being overset, as it must have been if M. de Tourville had scrambled into it. He fell into the water. Mr. Percy, without waiting to see the event, went off as fast as possible, justly considering that the lives of the number he had under his protection, including his son's and his own, were not to be sacrificed for one man, whatever his name or office might be, especially when that man had persisted against all warning in his rash selfishness.—At imminent danger to themselves, Mr. Percy and Godfrey, after landing those in the boat, returned once more to the wreck, and though they both declared that their consciences would be at ease even if they found that M. de Tourville was drowned, yet it was evident that they rejoiced to see him safe on board.—This time the boat held him, and all the rest of his fellow sufferers, and Mr. Percy and his son had the satis-

faction of bringing every soul safely to shore.—M. de Tourville, as soon as he found himself on terra-firma, joined with all around him in warm thanks to Mr. Percy and his son, by whom their lives had been saved.—Godfrey undertook to find lodgings for some of the passengers and for the ship's crew in the village, and Mr. Percy invited the captain, M. de Tourville, and the rest of the passengers to Percy-Hall, where Mrs. Percy and her daughters had prepared every thing for their hospitable reception. When they had warmed, dried, and refreshed themselves, they were left to enjoy what they wanted most, repose. The Percy family, nearly as much fatigued as their guests, were also glad to rest—all but Rosamond, who was wide awake, and so much excited by what had happened, that she continued talking to her sister, who slept in the same room with her, of every circumstance, and telling her imaginations of all that might come to pass from the adventures of the night,

whilst Caroline, too sleepy to be able to answer judiciously, or even plausibly, said, "yes"—"no"—and "very true"—in the wrong place, and at length, incapable of uttering even a monosyllable, was reduced to inarticulate sounds in sign of attention. These grew fainter and fainter, and after long intervals, absolutely failing, Rosamond with some surprise and indignation exclaimed—

"I do believe, Caroline, you are asleep!"—

And in despair, Rosamond, for want of an auditor, was compelled to compose herself to rest.

In the course of a few hours the storm abated, and in the morning, when the family and their shipwrecked guests assembled at breakfast, all was calm and serene. Much to Rosamond's dissatisfaction, M. de Tourville did not make his appearance. Of the other strangers she had seen only a glimpse the preceding night, and had not settled her curiosity concerning what sort of beings

they were. On a clear view by day-light of the personages who now sat at the breakfast table, there did not appear much to interest her romantic imagination, or to excite her benevolent sympathy. They had the appearance of careful money-making men, thick, square-built Dutch merchants, who said little and eat much—butter especially.—With one accord, as soon as they had breakfasted, they rose and begged permission to go down to the wreck to look after their property. Mr. Percy and Godfrey offered immediately to accompany them to the coast.

Mr. Percy had taken the precaution to set guards to watch all night, from the time he left the vessel, that no depredations might be committed. They found that some of the cargo had been damaged by the sea-water, but excepting this loss there was no other of any consequence; the best part of the goods was perfectly safe. As it was found that it would take some time to repair the

wreck, the Prussian and Hamburgh passengers determined to go on board a vessel, which was to sail from a neighboring port with the first fair wind. They came previously to their departure to thank the Percy family, and to assure them that their hospitality would never be forgotten.—Mr. Percy pressed them to stay at Percy-Hall till the vessel should sail, and till the captain should send notice of the first change of wind.—This offer, however, was declined, and the Dutch merchants, with due acknowledgments, said, by their speaking partner, that "they considered it safest and best to go with the goods, and so wished Mr. Percy a good morning, and that he might prosper in all his dealings; and—Sir," concluded he, "in any of the changes of fortune, which happen to men by land as well as by sea, please to remember the names of Grinderweld, Groensvelt, and Slidderchild of Amsterdam, or our correspondents, Panton and Co., London."

So having said, they walked away keeping an eye upon the goods.—

When Mr. Percy returned home it was near dinner time, yet M. de Tourville had not made his appearance. He was all this while indulging in a comfortable sleep. He had no goods on board the wreck, except his clothes, and as these were in certain trunks and portmanteaus, in which Comtois, his valet, had a joint concern, M. de Tourville securely trusted, that they would be obtained without his taking any trouble.

Comtois and the trunks again appeared, and a few minutes before dinner M. de Tourville made his entrance into the drawing room, no longer in the plight of a ship-wrecked mariner, but in gallant trim, wafting gales of momentary bliss, as he went round the room paying his compliments to the ladies, bowing, smiling, apologizing,—the very pink of courtesy!—The gentlemen of the family, who had seen him the preceding night in his frightened, angry, drenched, and

miserable state, could scarcely believe him to be the same person.

A Frenchman, it will be allowed, can contrive to say more, and to tell more of his private history in a given time, than could be accomplished by a person of any other nation. In the few minutes before dinner he found means to inform the company, that he was private secretary, and favorite of the minister of a certain German court. To account for his having taken his passage in a Dutch merchant vessel, and for his appearing without a suitable suite, he whispered that "he had been instructed to preserve a strict incognito, from which, indeed, nothing but the horrors of the preceding night could have drawn him."

Dinner was served, and at dinner M. de Tourville was seen, according to the polished forms of society, humbling himself in all the hypocrisy of politeness. With ascetic good-breeding, preferring every creature's ease and convenience to his own, practising a continual system

of self-denial, such as almost implied a total annihilation of self-interest and self-love. All this was strikingly contrasted with the selfishness which he had recently betrayed, when he was in personal danger. Yet, notwithstanding these recollections were against him, the influence of polite manners prevailed so far as to make his former conduct be forgotten by most of the family.

After dinner when the ladies retired, in the female privy council held to discuss the merits of the absent gentlemen, Rosamond spoke first, and during the course of five minutes pronounced as many contradictory opinions of M. de Tourville, as could well be enunciated in the same space of time.—At last she paused, and her mother smiled.

"I understand your smile, mother," said Rosamond, "but the reason I appear a *little* to contradict myself sometimes in my judgment of character is, because I speak my thoughts just as they rise in my mind, while persons, who

have a character for judgment to support, always keep the changes of their opinion snug to themselves, never showing the items of the account on either side, and let you see nothing but their balance.—This is very grand, and if their balance be right, very glorious.—But ignominious as my mode of proceeding may seem, exposing me to the rebukes, derision, uplifted hands and eyes of my *auditors*, yet exactly because I am checked at every little mistake I make in my accounts, the chance is in my favor, that my totals should at last be right, and my balance perfectly accurate."

"Very true, my dear—as long as you choose for your auditors only your friends, you are wise; but you sometimes lay your accounts open to strangers, and as they see only your errors without ever coming to your conclusion, they form no favorable opinion of your accuracy."

"I don't mind what strangers think of me—much,"—said Rosamond.—"At

least you will allow, Mamma, that I have reason to be satisfied, if only those who do not know me could form an unfavorable opinion of my judgment—and, after all, ma'am, of the two classes of people, those who 'Never said a foolish thing, and never did a wise one,' and those who never did a foolish thing, and never said a wise one, would not you rather that I should belong to the latter class?"

"Certainly, if I were reduced to the cruel alternative: but is there an unavoidable necessity for your belonging to either class?"

"I will consider of it, ma'am," said Rosamond, "in the meantime, Caroline, you will allow, that M. de Tourville is very agreeable?"

"Agreeable!" repeated Caroline—"such a selfish being!—Have you forgot his attempting to jump into the boat, at the hazard of oversetting it, and of drowning my father and Godfrey who went out to save him—and when my fa-

ther warned him—and promised to return for him—selfish cowardly creature!"

"Oh! poor man, he was so frightened, that he did not know what he was doing—he was not himself."

"You mean he was himself"—said Caroline.

"You are very ungrateful, Caroline," cried Rosamond, "for I am sure M. de Tourville admires you extremely—yes, in spite of that provoking incredulous smile, I say he does admire you exceedingly."

"And if he did," replied Caroline, "that would make no difference in my opinion of him."

"I doubt *that*," said Rosamond, "I know a person's admiring me would make a great difference in my opinion of his taste and judgment—and how much more if he had sense enough to admire you!"

Rosamond paused, and stood for some minutes silent in reverie.

"It will never do, my dear," said

Mrs. Percy, looking up at her—"Trust me, it will never do—turn him which way you will in your imagination, you will never make a hero of him—nor yet a brother-in-law."

"My dear mother, how could you guess what I was thinking of?" said Rosamond, coloring a little, and laughing,—"but I assure you—now let me explain to you, ma'am, in one word, what I think of M. de Tourville."

"Hush! my dear, he is here"—

The gentlemen came into the room to tea—M. de Tourville walked to the table at which Mrs. Percy was sitting, and, after various compliments on the beauty of the views from the windows, on the richness of the foliage in the park, and the superiority of English verdure, he next turned to look at the pictures in the saloon, distinguished a portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds, then passing to a table on which lay several books,—"Is it permitted?" said

he, taking up one of them—the Life of Lord Nelson.

M. de Tourville did not miss the opportunity of paying a just, and what to English ears he knew must be a delightful tribute of praise to our naval hero. Then opening several other books, he made a rash attempt to pronounce in English their titles, and with the happy facility of a Frenchman, M. de Tourville touched upon various subjects, dwelt upon none, but found means on all to say something to raise himself and his country in the opinion of the company, and at the same time to make all his auditors pleased with themselves. Presently, taking a seat between Rosamond and Caroline, he applied himself to draw out their talents for conversation. Nor did he labor in vain. They did not shut themselves up in stupid and provoking silence, nor did they make any ostentatious display of their knowledge or abilities.—M. de Tourville, as Rosamond had

justly observed, seemed to be particularly struck with Miss Caroline Percy.—She was beautiful, and of an uncommon style of beauty. Ingenuous, unaffected, and with all the simplicity of youth, there was a certain dignity and graceful self-possession in her manner, which gave the idea of a superior character. She had, perhaps, less of what the French call *esprit*, than M. de Tourville had been accustomed to meet with in young persons on the Continent, but he was the more surprised by the strength and justness of thought which appeared in her plain replies to the *finesse* of some of his questions.

The morning of the second day that he was at Percy-Hall, M. de Tourville was admiring the Miss Percys' drawings, especially some miniatures of Caroline's, and he produced his snuff-box, to show Mr. Percy a beautiful miniature on it's lid.

It was exquisitely painted. M. de Tourville offered it to Caroline to copy,

and Mrs. Percy urged her to make the attempt.

"It is the celebrated Euphrosine," said he, "who, from the stage, was very near mounting a throne."

M. de Tourville left the miniature in the hands of the ladies to be admired, and, addressing himself to Mr. Percy, began to tell with much mystery the story of Euphrosine. She was an actress of whom the Prince, heir apparent at the *German court* where he resided, had become violently enamoured. One of the Prince's young confidants had assisted his Royal Highness in carrying on a secret correspondence with Euphrosine, which she managed so artfully, that the Prince was on the point of giving her a written promise of marriage, when the intrigue was discovered, and prevented from proceeding farther, by a certain Count Albert Altenberg, a young nobleman who had, till that moment, been one of the Prince's favorites, but who by

thus opposing his passion, lost entirely his Prince's favor. The story was a common story of an intrigue, such as happens every day in every country where there is a young Prince; but there was something uncommon in the conduct of Count Altenberg. Mr. Percy expressed his admiration of it; but M. de Tourville, though he acknowledged, as in morality bound, that the Count's conduct "had been admirable, just what it ought to be upon this occasion, yet spoke of him altogether as *une tete exaltée*, a young man of a romantic Quixotic enthusiasm, to which he had sacrificed the interests of his family, and his own hopes of advancement at court. In support of this opinion, M. de Tourville related several anecdotes, and on each of these anecdotes Mr. Percy and M. de Tourville differed in opinion. All that was produced to prove, that the young Count had no judgment or discretion, appeared to Mr. Percy proofs of his independence of character, and greatness of soul. Mr. Percy,

repeated the anecdotes to Mrs. Percy and his daughters; and M. de Tourville, as soon as he saw that the ladies, and especially Caroline, differed from him, immediately endeavored to slide round to their opinion, and assured Caroline, with many asseverations, and with his hand upon his heart, that he had merely been speaking of the light in which these things appeared to the generality of men of the world, that for his own particular feelings they were all in favor of the frankness and generosity of character, evinced by these imprudences—he only lamented that certain *qualities* should expose their possessor to the censure and ridicule of those, who were, like half the world, incapable of being moved by any motive but interest, and unable to reach to the idea of the moral sublime."

The more M. de Tourville said upon the subject, and the more gesture and emphasis he used to impress the belief in his truth, the less Caroline believed him, and the more dislike and contempt she

felt, for the duplicity and pitiful meanness of a character, which was always endeavoring to seem, instead of to be.—He understood and felt the expression of her countenance, and mortified by that dignified silence, which said more than words could express, he turned away, and never afterwards addressed to her any of his *confidential* conversation.

From this moment Rosamond's opinion of M. de Tourville changed. She gave him up altogether, and denied, or at least gave him grudgingly, that praise, which he eminently deserved for agreeable manners and conversational talents. Not a foible of his now escaped her quick observation, and her lively perception of ridicule.

Whether from accident, or from some suspicion, that he had lost ground with the ladies, M. de Tourville the next day directed the principal part of his conversation to the gentlemen of the family; conforming himself with the importance of his political and official character, he

talked grandly of politics and diplomacy. Rosamond, who listened with an air of arch attention, from time to time with a tone of ironical simplicity, asked explanations on certain points relative to the diplomatic code of morality, and professed herself much edified and enlightened by the answers she received.

She wished, as she told Caroline, that some one would write "*Advice to Diplomatists,*" in the manner of Swift's Advice to Servants; and she observed that M. de Tourville, charge d' affaires, &c., might supply anecdotes illustrative, and might embellish the work with a portrait of a finished diplomatist. Unfortunately for the public, on the third morning of the diplomatist's visit, a circumstance occurred, which prevented the further developement of his character, stopped his flow of anecdote, and snatched him from the company of his hospitable hosts. In looking over his papers in order to show Mr. Percy a complimentary letter from some crowned head,

M. de Tourville discovered, that an important packet of papers, belonging to his despatches, was missing. He had in the moment of danger and terror stuffed all his despatches into his great coat pocket, in getting out of the boat he had given his coat to Comtois to carry, and strange to tell, this charge d' affaires had taken it upon trust, from the assertion of his valet, that all his papers were safe. He once, indeed, had looked them over, but so carelessly, that he never had missed the packet. His dismay was great when he discovered his loss. He repeated, at least a thousand times, that he was an undone man, unless the packet could be found. —Search was made for it, in the boat, on the shore, in every probable, and improbable place.—But all in vain—and in the midst of the search a messenger came to announce, that the wind was fair, that the ship would sail in one hour, and that the captain could wait for no man. M. de Tourville was oblig-

ed to take his departure without this precious packet.

Mrs. Percy was the only person in the family, who had the humanity to pity him. He was too little of a soldier for Godfrey's taste, too much of a courtier for Mr. Percy—too frivolous for Caroline, and too little romantic for Rosamond.

"So,"—said Rosamond, "here was a fine beginning of a romance with a shipwreck, that ends only in five square merchants, who do not lose even a guilder of their property, and a diplomatist, with whom we are sure of nothing but that he has lost a bundle of papers for which nobody cares."

In a few days the remembrance of the whole adventure began to fade from her fancy. M. de Tourville, and his snuff-box, and his essences, and his flattery, and his diplomacy, and his lost packet, and all the circumstances of the shipwreck, would have appeared as a dream, if they had not been main-

tained in the rank of realities, by the daily sight of the wreck, and by the actual presence of the Dutch sailors, who were repairing the vessel.

CHAPTER II.

A FEW days after the departure of M. de Tourville, Commissioner Falconer, a friend, or at least a relation of Mr. Percy's, came to pay him a visit. As the Commissioner looked out of the window and observed the Dutch carpenter, who was passing by with tools under his arm, he began to talk of the late shipwreck. Mr. Falconer said he had heard much of the successful exertions and hospitality of the Percy family on that occasion—regretted that he had himself been called to town just at that time—asked many questions about the passengers on board the vessel, and when M. de Tourville was described to him, deplored that Mr. Percy had never thought of trying to detain this foreigner a few days longer.

For—argued the Commissioner, though M. de Tourville might not be an accredited charge d' affaires, yet, since he was a person in some degree in an official capacity, and intrusted with secret negotiations, government might have wished to know something about him, and at all events, added the Commissioner, with a shrewd smile, it would have been a fine way of paying our court to a certain great man.

"So, Commissioner, you still put your trust in great men," said Mr. Percy.

"Not in all great men, but in some," replied the Commissioner—"for instance, in your old friend, Lord Oldborough, who, I'm happy to inform you, is just coming into our neighborhood to Clermont-Park, of which he has at last completed the purchase, and has sent down his plate and pictures.—Who knows but he may make Clermont-Park his summer residence, instead of his place in Essex? and if he should, there's no saying of what advantage it might be, for I have it

from the very best authority, that his Lordship's influence in *a certain quarter* is greater than ever. Of course, Mr. Percy, you will wait upon Lord Oldborough, when he comes to this part of the country?"

"No, I believe not:" said Mr. Percy, "I have no connexion with him now—"

"But you were so intimate with him abroad," expostulated Mr. Falconer.

"It is five and twenty years since I knew him abroad," said Mr. Percy, "and from all I have heard, he is an altered man. When I was intimate with Lord Oldborough, he was a generous, open-hearted youth. He has since become a politician, and I fear he has sold himself for a ribbon to the demon of ambition."

"No matter to whom he has sold himself, or for what," replied the Commissioner, "that is his affair, not ours. We must not be too nice. He is well disposed towards you, and, my dear Sir, I should take it as a very particular fa-

vor, if you would introduce me to his Lordship."

"With great pleasure," said Mr. Percy, "the very first opportunity."

"We must make opportunities—not wait for them," said the Commissioner, smiling.—"Let me entreat that you will pay your respects to his Lordship as soon as he comes into the country. It really is but civil—And take me in your hand."

"With all my heart," said Mr. Percy,—"but mine shall be only a visit of civility."

Well satisfied with having obtained this promise, Commissioner Falconer departed.

Besides his general desire to be acquainted with the great, the Commissioner had particular reasons for wishing to be introduced at this time to Lord Oldborough, and he had a peculiar cause for being curious about M. de Tourville.—Mr. Falconer was in possession of the packet which that diplomatist had lost. It had been found by one of the Commis-

sioner's sons, Mr. John Falconer, or rather by Mr. John Falconer's dog Neptune, who brought it to his master, when he was bathing in the sea the day after the shipwreck. It had been thrown by the tide among some sea-weed, where it was entangled, and where it lay hid till it was discovered by the dog. Mr. John Falconer had carried it home, and boasting of his dog's sagacity, had produced it rather as a proof of the capital manner in which he had taught Neptune to fetch and carry, than from any idea or care for the value of the packet. John Falconer being one of those men who care for very little in this world,

"Whilst they have their dog and their gun."

Not so the Commissioner, who immediately began to examine the papers with serious curiosity, to discover whether they could by any means be productive of advantage to him or his family. The sea-water had injured only the outer pages; but though the inner were not

in the least damaged, it was difficult to make out their contents, for they were written in cipher. Commissioner Falconer, however, was skilled in the art of deciphering, and possessed all the ingenuity and patience necessary for the business. The title, superscription, and signature of the paper were obliterated, so that he could not guess from whom they came, or to whom they were addressed; he perceived that they were political, but of what degree of importance they might be he could not decide, till he heard of M. de Tourville the diplomatist and of his distress at the loss of this packet. The Commissioner then resolved to devote the evening, ensuing day, and night, if requisite, to the business, that he might have it in readiness to carry with him when he went to pay his respects to Lord Oldborough. Foreseeing that something might be made of this intercepted despatch, and fearing that if he mentioned it to Mr. Percy, that gentleman might object to opening the papers, Mr. Fal-

coner left Percy-Hall without giving the most remote hint of the treasure which he possessed, or of the use that he intended to make of his discovery.

Early in the ensuing week Mr. Percy went to pay his visit of civility, and Mr. Falconer his visit of policy, to Lord Oldborough. His Lordship was so much altered, that it was with difficulty Mr. Percy recollected in him any traces of the same person. The Lord Oldborough he had formerly known was gay, gallant, and rather dissipated, of a frank, joyous air and manner. The Lord Oldborough, whom he now saw, was a serious, reserved-looking personage, with a face, in which the lines of thought and care were deeply marked; large eyebrows, vigilant eyes, with an expression of ability and decision in his whole countenance, but not of tranquillity, or of happiness. His manner was well bred, but rather cold and formal: his conversation circumspect, calculated to draw forth the opinions, and profit by the in-

formation of others, rather than to assert or display his own. He seemed to converse, to think, to live, not with any enjoyment of the present, but with a view to some future object, about which he was constantly anxious.

Mr. Percy and Mr. Falconer both observed Lord Oldborough attentively during this visit: Mr. Percy studied him with philosophical curiosity, to discover what changes had been made in his Lordship's character by the operation of ambition, and to determine how far that passion had contributed to his happiness;—Mr. Falconer studied him with the interested eye of a man of the world, eager to discern what advantage could be made by ministering to that ambition, and to decide whether there was about his Lordship the making of a good patron.

There was, he thought, the right twist, if he had but skill to follow, and humor it in the working; but this was a task of much nicety. Lord Oldborough appeared to be aware of the Commission-

er's views, and was not disposed to burden himself with new *friends*. It seemed easy to go to a certain point with his Lordship, but impossible to get further, easy to obtain his attention, but scarcely possible to gain his confidence.

The Commissioner, however, had many resources ready; many small means of fastening himself both on his Lordship's private and public interests. He determined to begin first with the despatch which he had been deciphering. With this view he led Mr. Percy to speak of the shipwreck, and of M. de Tourville. Lord Oldborough's attention was immediately awakened; and when Mr. Falconer perceived, that the regret for not having seen M. de Tourville, and the curiosity to know the nature of his secret negotiations had been sufficiently excited, the Commissioner quitted the subject, as he could go no farther whilst restrained by Mr. Percy's presence. He took the first opportunity of leaving the room with his Lordship's

nephew, Colonel Hauton, to look at some horses, which were to run at the ensuing races.

Left alone with Mr. Percy, Lord Oldborough looked less reserved, for he plainly saw,—indeed Mr. Percy plainly showed, that he had nothing to ask from the great man, but that he came only to see his friend.

"Many years since we met, Mr. Percy," said his Lordship, sitting down and placing his chair for the first time, without considering whether his face or his back were to the light.—"A great many years since we met, Mr. Percy. And yet, I should not think so from your appearance; you do not look as if ... shall I say it? ... five and twenty years had passed since that time. But you have been leading an easy life in the country, ... the happiest life. ... I envy you."

Mr. Percy, thinking that these were words of course, the mere polite *cant* of a courtier to a country-gentleman,

smiled, and replied, that few, who were acquainted with their different situations in the world, would imagine that Mr. Percy could be an object of envy to Lord Oldborough, a statesman at the summit of favor and fortune.

"Not the summit,"—said Lord Oldborough, sighing;—"and if I were even at the summit, it is, you know, a dangerous situation. Fortune's wheel never stands still—the highest point therefore the most perilous."—His Lordship sighed again as deeply as before.—Then spoke, or rather led to the subject, of general politics, of which Mr. Percy gave his opinions with freedom and openness, yet without ever forgetting the respect due to Lord Oldborough's situation. His Lordship seemed sensible of this attention, sometimes nodded, and sometimes smiled, as Mr. Percy spoke of public men or measures; but when he expressed any sentiment of patriotism, or of public virtue, Lord Oldborough took to his snuff-box, shook and

levelled the snuff, and if he listened, listened as to words superfluous and irrelevant. When Mr. Percy uttered any principle favorable to the liberty of the press, or of the people, his Lordship would take several pinches of snuff rapidly to hide the expression of his countenance; if the topics were continued, his averted eyes and compressed lips showed disapprobation, and the difficulty he felt in refraining from reply. From reply, however, he did absolutely refrain; and after a pause of a few moments, with a smile, in a softer and lower voice than his usual tone, he asked Mr. Percy some questions about his family, and turned the conversation again to domestic affairs;—expressed surprise, that a man of Mr. Percy's talents should live in such absolute retirement, and seeming to forget what he had said himself but half an hour before, of the pains and dangers of ambition, and all that Mr. Percy had said of his love of domestic life, appeared to take it for

granted, that Mr. Percy would be glad to shine in public, if opportunity were not wanting. Upon this supposition, his Lordship dexterously pointed out ways by which he might *distinguish* himself; threw out assurances of his own good wishes, compliments to his talents, and, in short, sounded his heart, still expecting to find corruption or ambition at the bottom.—But none was to be found—Lord Oldborough was convinced of it—and surprised.—Perhaps his esteem for Mr. Percy's understanding fell some degrees—he considered him as an eccentric person, acting from unaccountable motives.—But still he respected him as that rarest of all things in a politician's eye—a really honest independent man. He believed also that Mr. Percy had some regard for him; and whatever portion it might be, it was valuable and extraordinary—for it was disinterested;—besides, they could never cross in their objects—and as Mr. Percy lived out of the world, and had no connexion

with any party, he was a perfectly safe man. All these thoughts acted so powerfully upon Lord Oldborough, that he threw aside his reserve, in a manner which would have astonished and delighted Mr. Falconer.—Mr. Percy was astonished, but not delighted—he saw a noble mind corroded and debased by ambition—virtuous principle, generous feeling, stifled—a powerful, capacious understanding distorted beyond recovery —a soul once expatiating, and full of high thoughts, now confined to a span —bent down to low concerns—imprisoned in the precincts of a court.—

"You pity me," said Lord Oldborough, who seemed to understand Mr. Percy's thoughts—"you pity me—I pity myself.—But such is ambition, and I cannot live without it—once and always it's slave."

"A person of such a strong mind as Lord Oldborough could emancipate himself from any slavery—even that of habit."

"Yes, if he wished to break through it—but he does not."

"Can he have utterly——"

"Lost his taste for freedom? you would say—Yes—utterly—I see you pity me," said his Lordship with a bitter smile—"and," added he, rising proudly, "I am unused to be pitied, and I am awkward, I fear, under the obligation."—Resuming his friendly aspect, however, in a moment or two, he followed Mr. Percy, who had turned to examine a fine picture.

"Yes; a Corregio.—You are not aware, my dear Sir," continued he—"that between the youth you knew at Paris, and the man who has now the honor to speak to you, there is nothing in common—absolutely nothing—except regard for Mr. Percy. You had always great knowledge of character, I remember; but with respect to my own, you will recollect, that I have the advantage of possessing *la carte du pays*.—You are grown quite a philosopher, I find.—And

so am I, in my own way. In short, to put the question between us at rest for ever, *there is nothing left for me in life but ambition.* Now let us go to Corregio, or what you please."

Mr. Percy followed his Lordship's lead immediately to Italy, to France, to Paris, and talking over old times and youthful days, the conversation grew gay and familiar.—Lord Oldborough seemed enlivened and pleased, and yet, as if it was a reminiscence of a former state of existence, he often repeated—"Ah! those were young days—very young—I was a boy then—quite a boy."——At last, Mr. Percy touched upon love and women, and, by accident, mentioned an Italian lady whom they had known abroad.—A flash of pale anger, almost of phrenzy, passed across Lord Oldborough's countenance, he turned short, darted full on Mr. Percy a penetrating, imperious, interrogative look.—Answered by the innocence, the steady openness of Mr. Percy's counte-

nance, Lord Oldborough grew red instantly,—and, conscious of his unusual change of color, stood actually abashed.—A moment afterward, commanding his agitation, he forced his whole person to an air of tranquillity—took up the red book, which lay upon his table—walked deliberately to a window, and, looking earnestly through his glass, asked if Mr. Percy could recollect who was member for some borough in the neighborhood? The conversation after this, languished; and though some efforts were made, it never recovered the tone of ease and confidence. Both parties felt relieved from an indefinable sort of constraint by the return of the gentlemen. Mr. Falconer begged Mr. Percy to go and look at a carriage of a new construction, which the Colonel had just brought from town; and the Colonel accompanying Mr. Percy, the stage was thus left clear for the Commissioner to open his business about M. de Tourville's packet. He did it with so much address, and

with so little circumlocution, that Lord Oldborough immediately comprehended how important the papers might be to him, and how necessary it was to secure the decipherer. When Mr. Percy returned, he found the Commissioner and his Lordship in earnest and seemingly confidential conversation. Both Mr. Falconer and Mr. Percy were now pressed to stay to dine and to sleep at Clermont-Park; an invitation which Mr. Percy declined, but which the Commissioner accepted.

In the evening, when the company who had dined at Clermont-Park were settled to cards and music, Lord Oldborough, after walking up and down the room with the Commissioner in silence for some minutes, retired with him into his study, rang, and gave orders that they should not be interrupted on any account till supper. The servant informed his Lordship, that such and such persons, whom he had appointed, were waiting.—"I cannot possibly see them till to morrow"—naming the hour.—The ser-

vant laid on the table before his Lordship a huge parcel of letters.—Lord Oldborough, with an air of repressed impatience, bid the man send his secretary, Mr. Drakelow,—looked over the letters, wrote with a pencil, and with great despatch, a few words on the back of each—met Mr. Drakelow as he entered the room,—put the unfolded letters all together into his hands—

"The answers, on the back—to be made out in form—ready for signature at six to morrow."—

"Yes, my Lord—May I ask? . . . ."

"Ask nothing, Sir, if you please—I am busy—you have your directions—"

Mr. Drakelow bowed submissive, and made his exit with great celerity.

"Now to our business, my dear Sir," said his Lordship, seating himself at the table with Mr. Falconer, who immediately produced M. de Tourville's papers.—

It is not at this period of our story necessary to state precisely their contents;

it is sufficient to say, that they opened to Lord Oldborough a scene of diplomatic treachery abroad, and of ungrateful duplicity at home. From some of the intercepted letters he discovered that certain of his colleagues, who appeared to be acting along with him with the utmost cordiality, were secretly combined against him; and were carrying on an underplot to deprive him at once of popularity, favor, place, and power.—The strength, firmness,—hardness of mind, which Lord Oldborough exhibited at the moment of this discovery, perfectly amazed Mr. Falconer.—His Lordship gave no sign of astonishment, uttered no indignant exclamation, nor betrayed any symptoms of alarm; but he listened with motionless attention, when Mr. Falconer from time to time interrupted his reading, and put himself to great expense of face and lungs to express his abhorrence of "such inconceivable treachery." Lord Oldborough maintained an absolute silence, and waiting till the Commissioner

had exhausted himself in invective—would point with his pencil to the line in the paper where he had left off, and calmly say . . . . . "Have the goodness to go on—Let us proceed, Sir, if you please."—

The Commissioner went on till he came to the most important and interesting point, and there glancing his eye on his intended patron's profile, which was towards him,—he suddenly stopped.—Lord Oldborough, raising his head from the hand on which it leaned, turned his full front face upon Mr. Falconer.

"Let me hear the whole, if you please, Sir.—To form a judgment upon any business, it is necessary to have the whole before us.—You need not fear to shock my feelings, Sir.—I wish always to see men and things as they are."—Mr. Falconer still hesitating, and turning over the leaves—"As my friend in this business, Mr. Falconer,"—continued his Lordship—"you will comprehend, that the essential point is to put me as soon

as possible in possession of the facts—then I can decide, and act—If it will not fatigue you too much, I wish to go through these papers before I sleep."—

"Fatigue! Oh! my Lord, I am not in the least . . . . . cannot be fatigued—But the fact is, I cannot go on—for the next pages I have not yet deciphered—the cipher changes here—"

Lord Oldborough looked much disappointed and provoked, but after a few minutes' pause calmly said—"What time will it take, Sir, to decipher the remainder?"——

The Commissioner protested he did not know—could not form an idea—he and his son had spent many hours of intense labor on the first papers before he could make out the cipher—now this was a new cipher, probably more difficult, and whether he could make it out at all, or in what time, he was utterly unable to say.—Lord Oldborough replied—"Let us understand one another at once, Commissioner Falconer, if you please—My max-

im, and the maxim of every man in public life is, or ought to be,—Serve me and I will serve you.—I have no pretensions to Mr. Falconer's friendship on any other grounds, I am sensible; nor on any other terms can he have a claim to whatever power of patronage I possess. But I neither serve nor will be served by halves—My first object is to make myself master, as soon as possible, of the contents of the papers in your hands, my next to secure your inviolable secresy on the whole transaction.

The Commissioner was going to make vows of secresy and protestations of zeal, but Lord Oldborough cut all that short with——"Of course—Of course"—pronounced in the driest accent—and went on with——

"Now, Sir, you know my object; will you do me the honor to state yours?—You will excuse my abruptness—time in some circumstances is every thing—Do me and yourself the justice to say at once what return I can make for the service

you have done or may do me and government."

"My only hesitation in speaking, my Lord, was—"

"Have no hesitation in speaking, I beseech you, Sir—"

I beseech, in tone, was in effect, *I command* you, Sir,—And Mr. Falconer, under the influence of an imperious and superior mind, came at once to that point which he had not intended to come to for a month, or to approach till after infinite precaution and circumlocution.

"My object is, to push my son Cunningham in the diplomatic line, my Lord —and I wish to make him one of your secretaries."

The Commissioner stopped short, astonished to find that the truth, and the whole truth, had absolutely passed his lips, and in such plain words!—but they could not be recalled,—he gasped for breath—and began an apologetical sentence about "poor Mr. Drakelow, whom

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he should be so sorry to injure or displace—"

"Never mind that now—time enough to think of Drakelow," said Lord Oldborough, walking up and down the room—then stopping short——

"I must see your son, Sir."

"I will bring him here to morrow, if your Lordship pleases."

"As soon as possible! But he can come surely without your going for him.—write, and beg that we may see him at breakfast—at nine, if you please."

The letter was written, and despatched immediately. Lord Oldborough, whilst the Commissioner was writing, noted down the heads of what he had learned from M. de Tourville's packet.—Then locked up those of the papers which had been deciphered, put the others into Mr. Falconer's charge, and recommended it to him to use all possible despatch in deciphering the remainder.—The Commissioner declared he would sit up all night

at the task; this did not appear to be more than was expected.—His Lordship rung, and ordered candles in Mr. Falconer's room, then returned to the company in the saloon, without saying another word. None could guess by his countenance or deportment, that any unusual circumstance had happened, or that his mind was in the least perturbed. Mrs. Drakelow thought he was wholly absorbed in a rubber of whist, and Miss Drakelow at the same time was persuaded that he was listening to her music.

Punctual to the appointed hour—for ambition is as punctual to appointments as love—Mr. Cunningham Falconer made his appearance at nine, and was presented by his father to Lord Oldborough, who received him, not with any show of gracious kindness, but as one who had been forced upon him by circumstances, and whom for valuable considerations, he had bargained to take into his service. To try the young dip-

lomatist's talents, Lord Oldborough led him first to speak on the subject of the Tourville papers, then urged him on to the affairs of Germany, and the general interests and policy of the different courts of Europe. Trembling, and in agony for his son, the Commissioner stood aware of the danger of the youth's venturing out of his depth, aware also of the danger of showing that he dared not venture, and incapable of deciding between these equal fears: but soon he was reassured by the calmness of his son.—Cunningham, who had not so much information or capacity, but who had less sensibility than his father, often succeeded where his father's timidity prognosticated failure. Indeed, on the present occasion, the care which the young diplomatist took not to commit himself, the dexterity with which he "helped himself by countenance and gesture," and "was judicious by signs," proved that he was well skilled in all those arts of *seeming wise*, which have

been so well noted for use by "the greatest, wisest, meanest of mankind." Young though he was, Cunningham was quite sufficiently slow, circumspect, and solemn, to deserve to be ranked among those whom Bacon calls *Formalists*, "who do nothing, or little, very solemnly,—who seem always to keep back somewhat; and when they know within themselves they speak of what they do not know, would, nevertheless, seem to others to know that, of which they may not well speak."

Lord Oldborough listened to whatever he said, and marked all that he did not say with an air of attentive composure, which, as Mr. Falconer thought, augured well for his son; but now and then there was, for scarcely a definable portion of time, an expression of humor in his Lordship's eye, a sarcastic smile, which escaped the Commissioner's observation, and which, even if he had observed, he could not, with his limited knowledge of Lord Oldborough's character, have right-

ly interpreted. If his Lordship had expressed his thoughts, perhaps, they might have been, though in words less quaint, nearly the same as those of the philosophic statesman, who says:

"It is a ridiculous thing, and fit for a satire to persons of judgment, to see what shifts these *formalists* have, and what prospectives to make superficies to seem body that hath depth and bulk."

But Lord Oldborough philosophising, and Lord Oldborough acting, were two different people. His perception of the ridicule of the young secretary's solemnity, and of the insufficiency of his information and capacity, made no alteration in the minister's determination. The question was not whether the individual was fit for this place, or that employment, but whether it was expedient he should have it for the security of political power. Waving all delicacy, Lord Oldborough now, as in most other cases, made it his chief object to be understood and obeyed, therefore he an-

plied directly to the universal motive, and spoke the universal language of interest.

"Mr. Falconer," said he, "if you put me in possession of the remainder of M. de Tourville's papers this night, I will to morrow morning put this young gentleman into the hands of my present secretary Mr. Drakelow, who will prepare him for the situation you desire. Mr. Drakelow himself will, probably, soon leave me to be employed more advantageously for his Majesty's service, in some other manner."

The decipherers, father and son, shut themselves up directly, and set to work with all imaginable zeal. The whole packet was nearly expounded before night, and the next morning Lord Oldborough performed his part of the agreement. He sent for Mr. Drakelow, and said:

"Mr. Drakelow, I beg that, upon your return to town, you will be so good as to take this young gentleman,

Mr. Cunningham Falconer, to your office. Endeavor to prepare him to supply your place with me whenever it may be proper for his Majesty's service, and for your interests, to send you to Constantinople, or elsewhere."—

Mr. Drakelow, though infinitely surprised and displeased, bowed all submission. Nothing else he knew was to be done with Lord Oldborough. His Lordship, as soon as his secretary had left the room, turned to Cunningham, and said:

"You will not mention any thing concerning M. de Tourville's intercepted papers to Mr. Drakelow, or to any other person. Affairs call me to town immediately: to morrow morning at six, I set off. You will, if you please, Sir, be ready to accompany me. I will not detain you longer from any preparations you may have to make for your journey."

"No sooner had the father and son quitted Lord Oldborough's presence,

than Mr. Falconer exclaimed with exultation:

"I long to see our good cousin Percy, that I may tell him how I have provided already for one of my sons."

"But remember, Sir," said Cunningham, "that Mr. Percy is to know nothing of the Tourville packet."

"To be sure not," said Mr. Falconer, "he is to know nothing of the means, he is to see only the end—the successful end.—Ha! cousin Percy, I think we know rather better than you do, how to make something of every thing—even of a shipwreck."—

"To prevent his having any suspicions," continued Cunningham, "it will be best to give Mr. Percy some probable reason for Lord Oldborough's *taking to us* so suddenly. It will be well to hint that you have opportunities of obliging about the borough, or about the address at the county-meeting, or . . ."

"No, no, no particulars, never go to particulars," said old Falconer, stick

to generals, and you are safe.—Say, in general, that I had an opportunity of obliging government. Percy is not curious, especially about *jobbing*. He will ask no questions, or, if he should, I can easily put him upon a wrong scent.—Now, Cunningham, listen to me; I have done my best, and have got you into a fine situation; but remember, you cannot get on in the diplomatic line without a certain degree of diplomatic information. I have pointed this out to you often; you have neglected to make yourself master of these things, and, for want of them, in office you will come, I fear, some day or other to shame."—

"Do not be afraid of that—no danger of my coming to shame any more than a thousand other people in office, who never trouble themselves about diplomatic information, and all that.—There is always some clerk who knows the forms, and with those, and looking for what one wants on the spur of the occasion, in books and pamphlets, and

so forth, one may get on very well—if one does but know how to keep one's own counsel.—You see I got through with Lord Oldborough to day—"

"Aye—but I assure you I trembled for you, and I could have squeezed myself into an augur-hole once, when you blundered about that treaty of which I knew, that you knew nothing."

"Oh, Sir, I assure you I had turned over the leaves. I was correct enough as to the dates; and, suppose I blundered, as my brother Buckhurst says, half the world never know what they are saying, and the other half never find it out.—Why, Sir, you were telling me the other night such a blunder of Prince Potemkin's . . . ."

"Very true," interrupted the Commissioner, "but you are not Prince Potemkin, nor yet a prime minister, if you were, no matter how little you knew—you might get other people to supply your deficiencies. But now in your place, and in the course of making your

way upwards, you will be called upon to supply *others* with the information they may want. And you know I shall not be always at your elbow; therefore, I really am afraid——"

"Dear Sir, fear nothing!" said Cunningham, "I shall do as well as others do—the greatest difficulty is over. I have taken the first step, and it has cost nothing."

"Well, get on, my boy—honestly, if you can—but get on."

CHAPTER III.

WITH the true genius of a political castle-builder, Mr. Falconer began to add story after story to the edifice, of which he had thus promptly and successfully laid the foundation. Having by a lucky hit provided for one of his sons, that is to say, put him in a fair way of being provided for, the industrious father began to form plans for the advancement of his two other sons, Buckhurst and John.—Buckhurst was destined by his father for the church: John for the army. The Commissioner, notwithstanding he had been closetted for some hours with Lord Oldborough, and notwithstanding his son Cunningham was to be one of his Lordship's secretaries, was well aware that little or no progress had been made in Lord Oldborough's

real favor or confidence. Mr. Falconer knew, that he had been literally *paid by the job*, that he was considered and treated accordingly: yet upon the whole he was well pleased that it should be so, for he foresaw the possibility of his doing for his Lordship many more jobs, public and private. He lost no time in preparing for the continuity of his secret services, and in creating a political necessity for his being employed in future, in a manner that might ensure the advancement of the rest of his family. In the first place, he knew that Lord Oldborough was desirous for the enlargement of the demesne at Clermont-Park, to purchase certain adjoining lands, which, from some ancient pique, the owner was unwilling to sell. The proprietor was a tenant of Mr. Falconer's, he undertook to negotiate the business, and to use his influence to bring his tenant to reason. This offer, made through Cunningham, was accepted by Lord Oldborough, and the negotiation led to fresh communications.—There

was soon to be a county meeting, and an address was to be procured in favor of certain measures of government, which it was expected would be violently opposed. In the Commissioner's letters to his son, the private secretary, he could say and suggest whatever he pleased; he pointed out the gentlemen of the county who ought to be conciliated, and he offered his services to represent things properly to some with whom he was intimate.—The sheriff and the undersheriff also should know, without being informed directly from ministry, what course in conducting the meeting would be agreeable in a certain quarter—who so proper to say and do all that might be expedient as Mr. Falconer, who was on the spot, and well acquainted with the county?—The Commissioner was informed by the private secretary, that his services would be acceptable.—There happened also, at this time, to be some disputes and grievances in that part of the country about tax-gatherers.—Mr. Fal-

coner hinted, that he could soften and accommodate matters, if he were empowered to do so——and he was so empowered.—Besides all this, there was a borough in that county, in which the interest of government had been declining; attempts were made to *open the borough*—Mr. Falconer could be of use in *keeping it close*—and he was commissioned to do every thing in his power in this business. In a short time Mr. Falconer was acting on all these points as an agent and partisan of Lord Oldborough's. But there was one thing which made him uneasy; he was acting here, as in many former instances, merely upon vague hopes of future reward.

Whilst his mind was full of these thoughts, a new prospect of advantage opened to him in another direction. Colonel Hauton, Lord Oldborough's nephew, stayed during his uncle's absence at Clermont-Park, to be in readiness for the races, which, this year, were expected to be uncommonly fine. Buck-

hurst Falconer had been at school and at the university with the Colonel, and had frequently helped him in his Latin exercises. The Colonel having been always deficient in scholarship, he had early contracted an aversion to literature, which at last amounted to an antipathy even to the very sight of books, in consequence, perhaps, of his uncle's ardent and precipitate desire to make him apply to them, whilst his head was full of tops and balls—kites and ponies.—Be this as it may, Commissioner Falconer thought his son Buckhurst might profit by this school friendship, and might now renew and improve the connexion. Accordingly Buckhurst waited upon the Colonel, was immediately recognised and received with promising demonstrations of joy.

It would be difficult, indeed impossible, to describe Colonel Hauton, so as to distinguish him from a thousand other young men of the same class, except, perhaps, that he might be characterized by having more exclusive and inveterate

selfishness. Yet this was so far from appearing or being suspected on a first acquaintance, that he was generally thought a sociable, good-natured fellow. It was his absolute dependance upon others for daily amusement and ideas, or rather for knowing what to do with himself, that gave him this semblance of being sociable; the total want of proper pride and dignity in his whole deportment—a certain *slang* and familiarity of tone, gave superficial observers the notion that he was good-natured.—It was Colonel Hauton's great ambition to look like his own coachman; he succeeded only so far, as to look like his groom: but though he kept company with jockeys and coachmen, grooms and stable-boys, yet not the stiffest, haughtiest, flat-backed Don of Spain, in Spain's proudest days, could be more completely aristocratic in his principles, or more despotic in his habits.—This could not break out to his equals, and his equals cared little how he treated his inferiors.

His present pleasure, or rather his present business, for no man made more a business of pleasure than Colonel Hauton, was *the turf*. Buckhurst Falconer could not here assist him as much as in making Latin verses, but he could admire and sympathize; and the Colonel, proud of being now the superior, proud of his *knowing style* and his *capital* stud, enjoyed Buckhurst's company particularly, pressed him to stay at Clermont-Park, and to accompany him to the races.—There was to be a *famous* match between Colonel Hauton's High-Blood and Squire Burton's Wildfire.—And the preparations of the horses and of their riders occupied the intervening days. With all imaginable care, anxiety, and solemnity, these important preparations were conducted. At stated hours Colonel Hauton, and with him Buckhurst, went to see High-Blood rubbed down, and fed, and watered, and exercised, and minuted, and rubbed down, and littered.—Next to the horse, the rider, Jack Giles, was

to be attended to with the greatest solicitude; he was to be weighed—and starved—and watched—and drammed—and *sweated*—and weighed again—and so on, in daily succession; and harder still, through this whole course he was to be kept in humor—"None that ever sarved man or beast," as the stable-boy declared, "ever worked harder for their bread, than his master and master's companion did this week for their pleasure."

At last the great, the important day arrived—and Jack Giles was weighed for the last time in public, and so was Tom Hand, Squire Burton's rider—and High-Blood and Wildfire were brought out; and the spectators assembled in the stand, and about the scales, were all impatience, especially those who had betted on either of the horses.——And—Now Hauton!—Now Burton!—Now High-Blood!—Now Wildfire!—Now Jack Giles!—And—Now, Tom Hand!—resounded on all sides—The gentlemen on the race-ground were all on tiptoe

in their stirrups. The ladies in the stand, stretched their necks of snow, and nobody looked at them.—Two men were run over, and nobody took them up.—Two ladies fainted, and two gentlemen betted across them. This was no time for nice observances—Jack Giles's spirit began to flag—and Tom Hand's judgment *to tell*—High-Blood, on the full stretch, was within view of the winning post, when Wildfire, quite in wind, was put to his speed by the judicious Tom Hand—he sprang forward, came up with High-Blood—passed him—Jack Giles strove in vain to regain his ground—High-Blood was blown, beyond the power of whip or spur—Wildfire reached the post, and Squire Burton won the match hollow.

His friends congratulated him and themselves loudly, and extolled Tom Hand and Wildfire to the skies—In the moment of disappointment, Colonel Hauton, out of humor, said something that implied a suspicion of unfairness on

the part of Burton or Tom Hand, which the honest Squire could not brook, either for self or rider. He swore, "that his Tom Hand was as honest a fellow as any in England, and he would back him for such!"—The Colonel, depending on his own and his uncle's importance, on his party and his flatterers, treated the Squire with some of the haughtiness of rank, which the Squire retorted with some rustic English humor. The Colonel, who had not wit at will, to put down his antagonist, became still more provoked to see that such a low-born fellow as the Squire should and could laugh, and make others laugh. For the lack of wit the Colonel had recourse to insolence, and went on from one impertinence to another, till the Squire enraged, declared "that he would not be brow-beat by any Lord's nephew, or Jackanapes Colonel that ever wore a head, and as he spoke, tremendous in his ire, Squire Burton brandished high the British horse-whip. At this critical

moment, as it has been asserted by some of the by-standers, the Colonel *quailed* and backed a few paces, but others pretend that Buckhurst Falconer pushed before him.—It is certain that Buckhurst stopped the blow, wrested the horse-whip from the Squire—was challenged by him on the spot—accepted the challenge—fought the Squire—*winged* him—appeared on the race ground afterwards, and was admired by the ladies in public, and by his father in private, who looked upon the duel and horse-whipping, from which he thus saved his patron's nephew, as the most fortunate circumstance that could have happened to his son upon his entrance into life.

"Such an advantage as this gives us! Such a claim upon the Colonel—and, indeed, upon the whole family. Lord Oldborough, having no children of his own, looks to the nephew as his heir—and, though he may be vexed now and then by the Colonel's extravagance,

and angry that he could not give this nephew more of a political turn, yet such as he is, depend upon it, he can do what he pleases with Lord Oldborough. —Whoever has the nephew's ear, has the uncle's heart; or I should say, whoever has the nephew's heart, has the uncle's ear."—

"Mayn't we as well put hearts out of the question on all sides, Sir?" said Buckhurst.

"With all my heart," said his father, laughing, "provided we don't put a good living out of the question on our side."—

Buckhurst looked averse, and said he did not know there was any such thing in question.—

"No!" said his father—"was it then from the pure and abstract love of being horse-whipped, or shot at, that you took this quarrel off his hands?"

"Faith! I did it from spirit, pure spirit," said Buckhurst, "I could not stand by, and see one who had been my

schoolfellow horse-whipped—no, damn it, if he did not stand by himself, *yet* I could not but stand by *him*, for you know I was there as one of his party—and as I backed his bets on High-Blood, I could do no less than back his cause altogether.—Oh! I could not stand by and see *a chum* of my own horse-whipped."

"Well, that was all very spirited and generous; but now, as you are something too old for mere school-boy notions," said the Commissioner—"let us look a little farther, and see what we can make of it.—It's only a silly boyish thing as you consider it, but I hope we can turn it to good account."

"I never thought of turning it to account, Sir."—

"Think of it now," said the father, a little provoked by the careless disinterestedness of the son—"In plain English, here is a colonel in his Majesty's service saved from a horse-whipping—a whole noble family saved from disgrace—these are things not to be forgotten. That is,

not to be forgotten, if you force people to remember them—otherwise . . . my word for it—I know the great—the whole would be forgotten in a week.—Therefore, leave me to follow the thing up properly with the uncle, and do you never let it sleep with the nephew . . . Sometimes a bold stroke, sometimes a delicate touch, just as the occasion serves, or as may suit the company present . . . . All that I trust to your own address and judgment."

"Trust nothing, Sir, to my address or judgment, for in these things I have neither.—I always act just from impulse and feeling, right or wrong—I have no talents for *finesse*—leave them all to Cunningham—that's his trade, and he likes it luckily, and you should be content with having one such genius in your family—No family could bear two—"

"Come, come, pray be serious, Buckhurst.—If you have not, or will not use any common sense and address to advance yourself, leave that to me.—You

see how I have pushed up Cunningham already, and all I ask of you is to be quiet, and let me push you up."

"Oh! dear Sir, I am very much obliged to you: if that is all, I will be quite quiet—so that I am not to do any thing shabby or dirty for it. I should be vastly glad to get a good place, and be provided for handsomely—"

"No doubt—and let me tell you that many I could name, have with inferior claims, and without any natural connexion or relationship, from the mere favor of proper friends, obtained church benefices of much greater value, than the living we have in our eye . . . . you know—"

"I do not know, indeed,"—said Buckhurst, "I protest I have no living in my eye."

"What! not know, that the living of Chipping-Friars is in the gift of Colonel Hauton—and the present incumbent has had one paralytic stroke already.—There's a prospect for you, Buckhurst!"

"To be frank with you, Sir, I have no taste for the church."

"No taste for nine-hundred a year, Buckhurst? No desire for fortune, Mr. Philosopher?"

"Pardon me, a very strong taste for that, Sir—Not a bit of a philosopher—As much in love with fortune as any man, young or old—is there no way to fortune but through the church?"—

"None for you so sure and so easy, all circumstances considered,"—said his father—"I have planned and settled it, and you have nothing to do but to get yourself ordained as soon as possible. I shall write to my friend the Bishop—for that purpose this very night."

"Let me beg, father, that you will not be so precipitate.—Upon my word, Sir, I cannot go into orders.—I am not .... in short, I am not fit for the church."

The father stared with an expression, between anger and astonishment.

"Have not you gone through the University?"—"Yes, Sir . . . but . . . .

but I am scarcely sober, and *staid*, and moral enough for the church . . . Such a wild fellow as I am . . . I really could not in conscience . . . . I would not upon any account, for any living upon earth, or any emolument, go into the church, unless I thought I could do credit to it."—

"And why should not you do credit to the church? I don't see that you are wilder than your neighbors, and need not be more scrupulous.—There is G—, who at your age was wild enough, but he took up in time, and is now a plump dean.—Then, there is the bishop that is just made.——I remember him such a youth as you are.—Come, come, these are idle scruples. Let me hear no more, my dear Buckhurst, of your conscience."

"Dear Sir, I never pleaded my conscience on any occasion before—You know that I am no puritan—but really on this point I have some conscience, and I beg you not to press me farther.—You have other sons—and if you cannot

spare Cunningham,—that treasure of diplomacy!—there's John, surely you might contrive to spare him for the church."

"Spare him I would, and welcome .... But you know I could never get John into orders."

"Why not, Sir? John, I'll swear, would have no objection to the church, provided you could get him a good fat living."

"But I am not talking of *his* objections.—To be sure he would make no objection to a good fat living, nor would any body in his senses, except yourself. —But I ask you, how I could possibly get your brother John into the church—John's a dunce,—and you know it."

"Nobody better, Sir; but are there no dunces in the church?—And as you are so good as to think that I'm no wilder than my neighbors, you surely will not say that my brother is more a dunce than his neighbors.—Put him into the hands of a clever grinder, or

crammer, and they would soon cram the necessary portion of latin and greek into him, and they would get him through the university for us readily enough; and a degree once obtained, he might snap his fingers at latin and greek all the rest of his life.—Once in orders, and he might sit down upon his fat living, or lie down content, all his days, only taking care to have some poor devil of a curate up and about, doing duty for him."

"So I find you have no great scruples for your brother, whatever you may have for yourself." . . . . "Sir, I am not the keeper of my brother's conscience.—Indeed, if I were, you might congratulate me in the words of Sir B. R. upon the possession of a sinecure place."

"It is a pity, Buckhurst, that you cannot use your wit for yourself as well as for other people. Ah! Buckhurst! Buckhurst! you will, I fear, do worse in the world than any of your brothers,

for wits are always *unlucky*.—Sharp-sighted enough to every thing else, but blind, stone blind to their own interest.—Wit is folly, when one is talking of serious business."

"Well, my dear father, *be agreeable*, and I will not be witty.—In fact, in downright earnest, the sum total of the business is, that I have a great desire to go into the army, and I entreat you to procure me a commission."

"Then the sum total of the business is, that I will not, for I cannot afford to purchase you a commission, and to maintain you in the army—"

"But by using interest, perhaps, Sir," —said Buckhurst,

"My interest must be all for your brother John; for I tell you I can do nothing else for him but put him into the army.—He's a dunce.—I must get him a commission, and then I have done with him."

"I wish I was a dunce," said Buck-

hurst, sighing, "for then I might go into the army—instead of being forced into the church."

"There's no force upon your inclinations, Buckhurst," said his father in a soft tone;—"I only show you, that it is impossible I should maintain you in the army, and, therefore, beg you to put the army out of your head. And I don't well see what else you could do. You have not application enough for the bar, nor have I any friends among the attorneys, except Sharpe, who, between you and me, might take your dinners, and leave you without a brief afterwards.—You have talents, I grant," continued the Commissioner, "and if you had but application, and if your uncle the judge had not died last year———"

"Oh, Sir, he is dead, and we can't help it," interrupted Buckhurst.—"And as for me, I never had, and never shall have, any application.—So pray put the bar out of your mind."

"Very cavalier indeed!—but I will

make you serious at once, Buckhurst. —You have nothing to expect from my death—I have not a farthing to leave you—my place, you know, is only for life—your mother's fortune is all in annuity, and two girls to be provided for—and to live as we must live—up to and beyond my income—shall have nothing to leave.——Though you are my eldest son, you see it is in vain to look to my death—so into the church you must go, or be a beggar—and get a living, or starve.—Now I have done—" concluded the Commissioner, quitting his son; "and I leave you to think of what has been said."

Buckhurst thought and thought, but still his interest and his conscience were at variance, and he could not bring himself either to be virtuous or vicious enough, to comply with his father's wishes.—He could not decide to go into the church merely from interested motives,—from that his conscience revolted —he could not determine to make him-

self fit to do credit to the sacred profession; against this his habits and his love of pleasure revolted. He went to his brother John, to try what could be done with him. Latin and greek were insuperable objections with John, besides, though he had a dull imagination in general, John's fancy had been smitten with one bright idea of an epaulette, from which no considerations, fraternal, political, moral, or religious, could distract his attention.—His genius, he said, was for the army, and into the army he would go.—So to his genius, Buckhurst, in despair, was obliged to leave him.—The Commissioner neglected not to push the claim which he had on Colonel Hauton, and he chose his time so well, when proper people were by, and when the Colonel did not wish to have the Squire, and the horse-whip, and the duel brought before the public, that he obtained, if not a full acknowledgment of obligation, a promise of doing any thing and every thing in his power

for his friend Buckhurst.—Any thing and every thing, were indefinite, unsatisfactory terms, and the Commissioner, bold in dealing with the timid temper of the Colonel, though he had been cautious with the determined character of the uncle, pressed his point—named the living of Chipping-Friars—showed how well he would be satisfied, and how well he could represent matters, if the promise was given, and at the same time, made it understood how loudly he could complain, and how disgraceful his complaints might prove to the Oldborough family, if his son was treated with ingratitude. The Colonel particularly dreaded that he should be suspected of want of spirit, and that his uncle should have the transaction laid before him in this improper point of view.—He pondered for a few moments, and the promise for the living of Chipping-Friars was given. —The Commissioner, secure of this, next returned to the point with his son, and absolutely insisted upon his . . . going into

orders. Buckhurst, who had tried wit and raillery in vain, now tried persuasion and earnest entreaties, but these were equally fruitless; his father, though an easy, good-natured man, except where his favorite plans were crossed, was peremptory, and without using harsh words, he employed the harshest measures to force his son's compliance. Buckhurst had contracted some debts at the University, none of any great consequence, but such as he could not pay immediately.—The bets he had laid and lost upon High-Blood were also to be provided for; debts of honor claimed precedency, and must be directly discharged. His father positively refused to assist him, except upon condition of his compliance with his wishes; and so far from affording him any means of settling with his Oxford creditors, it has been proved from the Commissioner's *private* answers to some of their applications, that he not only refused to pay a farthing for his son, but encouraged

the creditors to threaten him in the strongest manner with the terrors of law and arrest. Thus pressed and embarrassed, the young man, who had many honorable and religious sentiments, and genuine feelings, but no power of adhering to principle or reason, was miserable beyond expression one hour—and the next he became totally forgetful that there was any thing to be thought of but the amusement of the moment.—Incapable of coming to any serious decision, he walked up and down his room talking, partly to himself, and partly, for want of a better companion, to his brother John.

"So I must pay Wallis to morrow, or he'll arrest me.—And I must give my father an answer about the church to night—for he writes to the Bishop—and will wait no longer.——Oh! hang it! hang it, John! what the devil shall I do?—My father won't pay a farthing for me, unless I go into the church!"

"Well then, why can't you go into

the church," said John—"since you are through the University the worst is over?"

"But I think it so wrong, so base .... for money...for emolument...I cannot do it...I am not fit for the church—I know I shall disgrace it"—said Buckhurst, striking his forehead—I cannot do it.... I can not—it is against my conscience."

John stopped, as he was filling his shooting-pouch, and looked at Buckhurst (his mouth half open), with an expression of surprise at these demonstrations of sensibility. He had some sympathy for the external symptoms of pain which he saw in his brother, but no clear conception of the internal cause.

"Why, Buckhurst," said he—"if you cannot do it, you can't you know, Buckhurst;—but I don't see why you should be a disgrace to the church more than another—as my father says.—If I was but through the University, I had as lieve go into the church as not—that's all I can say.—And if my genius was

not for the military line, there's nothing I should relish better than the living of Chipping-Friars, I'm sure.—The only thing that I see against it is, that that paralytic incumbent may live many a year.—But, then, you get your debts paid now by only going into orders, and that's a great point .... but if it goes against your conscience—you know best —if you can't—you can't."—

"After all, I can't go to jail—I can't let myself be arrested—I can't starve—I can't be a beggar," said Buckhurst,—"and as you say, I should be so easy if these cursed debts were paid—and if I got this living of nine-hundred a year, how comfortable I should be.—Then I could marry, by Jove; and I'd propose directly for Caroline Percy, for I'm confoundedly in love with her—such a sweet-tempered good creature!—not a girl so much admired! Col. Hauton—and G— and P. and D— asked me, —'Who is that pretty girl?'—She certainly is a very pretty girl."—

"She certainly is," repeated John.—"This devil of a fellow never cleans my gun."—

"Not regularly handsome neither," pursued Buckhurst.—"But, as Hauton says, fascinating and new, and a new face in public is a great matter.—Such a fashionable looking figure too—though she has not *come out* yet—dances charmingly—would dance divinely, if she would let herself out—and she sings and plays like an angel, fifty times better than our two precious sisters, who have been *at it* from their cradles, with all the Signor *Squalicis* at their elbows—Caroline Percy never exhibits in public.—The mother does not like it, I suppose."

"So I suppose," said John.—"Curse this flint!—flints are growing worse and worse every day—I wonder what in the world are become of all the good flints there used to be——"

"Very unlike our mother, I am sure"—continued Buckhurst.—"There are

Georgiana and Bell at all the parties and concerts as regularly as any of the professors, standing up in the midst of the singing men and women, favoring the public in as fine a bravura style, and making as ugly faces as the best of them. —Do you remember the Italian's compliment to Miss * * * * * * ?—"I vish, Miss, I had your *assurance*."——

"Very good, ha!—very fair, faith," said John—"do you know what I've done with my powder-horn?"—

"Not I—put it in the oven, may be, to dry," said Buckhurst.—"But as I was saying of my dear Caroline . . . . *My* Caroline!——She is not mine yet."

"Very true," said John.

"Very true! Why, John, you are enough to provoke a saint!"

"I was agreeing with you, I thought," said John.

"But nothing is so provoking as always agreeing with one—and I can tell you, Mr. Verytrue, that though Caroline Percy is not mine yet, I have ne-

vertheless a little suspicion, that, such even as I am, she might readily be brought to love, honor, and obey me."

"I don't doubt it, for I never yet knew a woman that was not ready enough to be married"—quoth John.—"But this is not the right ramrod after all."—

"There you are wrong, John, on the other side," said Buckhurst—"for I can assure you, Miss Caroline Percy is not one of your young ladies who would marry any body. And even though she might like me, I am not at all sure that she would marry me—for obedience to the best of fathers might interfere."

"There's the point," said John,—"for thereby hangs the fortune, and it would be a *deused* thing to have the girl without the fortune."

"Not so *deused* a thing to me, as you think," said Buckhurst, laughing—"for poor as I am, I can assure you, the fortune is not my object—I am not a mercenary dog."

"By the by," cried John—"now you talk of dogs . . . . I wish to Heaven above! you had not given away that fine puppy of mine to that foolish old man, who never was out a shooting in his days, the dog's just as much thrown away, as if you had drowned him.—Now, do you know, if I had had *the making* of that puppy——"

——"Puppy!" exclaimed Buckhurst—"is it possible you can be thinking of a puppy, John, when I am talking to you of what is of so much consequence?—When the whole happiness of my life is at stake?"——

——"Stake!—Well, but what can I do more?" said John—"have not I been standing here this half hour with my gun in my hand this fine day, listening to you prosing about I don't know what?"——

"That's the very thing I complain of—that you do not know what—a pretty brother!" said Buckhurst.

John made no further reply, but left

the room, sullenly, whistling as he went.

Left to his own cogitations, Buckhurst fell into a reverie upon the charms of Caroline Percy, and upon the probable pleasure of dancing with her at the race-ball; after this, he recurred to the bitter recollection, that he must decide about his debts, and the church. A bright idea came into his mind, that he might have recourse to Mr. Percy, and, perhaps, prevail upon him to persuade his father not to force him to a step, which he could not reconcile either to his conscience or his inclination.—No sooner thought than done.—He called for his horse, and rode as hard as he could to Percy-Hall.—When a boy, he had been intimate in the Percy family; but he had been long absent at school and at the University; they had seen him only during the vacations, and since his late return to the country. Though Mr. Percy could not entirely approve of his character, yet he thought

there were many good points about Buckhurst; the frankness and candor with which he now laid his whole mind and all his affairs open to him—debts—love—fears—hopes—follies—faults—without reserve or extenuation, interested Mr. Percy in his favor.—Pitying his distress, and admiring the motives from which he acted, Mr. Percy said, "that though he had no right to interfere in Mr. Falconer's family affairs, yet that he could, and would, so far assist Buckhurst, as to lend him the money for which he was immediately pressed, that he might not be driven by necessity to go into that profession, which ought to be embraced only from the highest and purest motives." Buckhurst thanked him with transports of gratitude for this generous kindness, which was far beyond his expectations, and which, indeed, had never entered into his hopes. Mr. Percy seized the moment when the young man's mind was warmed with good feelings, to endeavor to bring him

to serious thoughts and rational determinations about his future life. He represented, that it was unreasonable to expect that his father should let him go into the army, when he had received an education to prepare himself for a profession, in which his literary talents might be of advantage both to himself and his family; that Mr. Falconer was not rich enough to forward two of his sons in the army; that if Buckhurst, from conscientious motives, declined the provision which his father had in view for him in the church, he was bound to exert himself to obtain an independent maintenance in another line of life—that he had talents which would succeed at the bar, if he had application and perseverance sufficient to go through the necessary drudgery at the commencement of the study of the law.—

. . . . . .

Here Buckhurst groaned.—But Mr. Percy observed, "that there was no other way of proving that he acted from conscientious motives respecting the

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church, for otherwise it would appear, that he preferred the army only because he fancied it would afford a life of idleness and pleasure.—That this would also be his only chance of winning the approbation of the object of his affections, and of placing himself in a situation in which he could marry.——Buckhurst, who was capable of being strongly influenced by good motives, especially from one who had obliged him, instantly, and in the most handsome manner, acknowledged the truth and justice of Mr. Percy's arguments, and declared that he was ready to begin the study of the law directly, if his father would consent to it; and that he would submit to any drudgery rather than do what he felt to be base and wrong. Mr. Percy, at his earnest request, applied to Mr. Falconer, and with all the delicacy that was becoming, claimed the right of relationship to speak of Mr. Falconer's family affairs, and told him what he had ventured to do about Buckhurst's debts;

and what the young man now wished for himself.—The Commissioner looked much disappointed and vexed.

"The bar!" cried he—"Mr. Percy, you don't know him as well as I do. I will answer for it, he will never go through with it—and then he is to change his profession again!—and all the expense and all the trouble is to fall on me!—and I am to provide for him at last!—In all probability, by the time Buckhurst knows his own mind, the paralytic incumbent will be dead, and the living of Chipping-Friars given away.—And where am I to find nine hundred a year, I pray you, at a minute's notice, for this conscientious youth, who, by that time, will tell me his scruples were all nonsense, and that I should have known better than to listen to them. Nine hundred a year does not come in a man's way at every turn of his life;—and if he gives it up now it is not my fault, let him look to the consequences."

Mr. Percy replied, "that Buckhurst

had declared himself ready to abide by the consequences, and that he promised he would never complain of the lot he had chosen for himself, much less reproach his father for his compliance, and that he was resolute to maintain himself at the bar."

"Yes; very fine.—And how long will it be before he makes nine hundred a year at the bar?"

Mr. Percy, who knew that none but worldly considerations made any impression upon this father, suggested that he would have to maintain his son during the life of the paralytic incumbent, and the expense of Buckhurst's being at the bar would not probably be greater; and though it might be several years before he could make nine hundred or, perhaps, one hundred a year, at the bar, yet that if he succeeded, which, with Buckhurst's talents, nothing but the want of perseverance could prevent, he might make nine thousand a year by the profession of the law,—more than in

the scope of human probability, and with all the patronage his father's address could procure, he could hope to obtain in the church.

"Well, let him try—let him try," repeated the Commissioner, who, vexed as he was, did not choose to run the risk of disobliging Mr. Percy, losing a good match for his son, or undergoing the scandal of it's being known that he forced his son into the church.

For obtaining this consent, however reluctantly granted by the Commissioner, Buckhurst warmly thanked Mr. Percy, who made one condition with him, that he would go up to town immediately to commence his studies.

This Buckhurst faithfully promised to do, and only implored permission to declare his attachment to Caroline.—Caroline was at this time not quite eighteen, too young, her father said, to think of forming any serious engagement, even were it with a person suited to her in fortune and in every other respect.—

Buckhurst declared, that he had no idea of endeavoring, even to obtain from Miss Caroline Percy, any promise or engagement.—He had been treated, he said, too generously by her father, to attempt to take any step without his entire approbation.

He knew he was not, and could not, for many years, be in circumstances that would enable him to support a daughter of Mr. Percy's in the station to which she was, by her birth and fortune, entitled.—All he asked, he repeated, was, to be permitted to declare to her his passion.

Mr. Percy thought it was more prudent to let it be declared openly than to have it secretly suspected, therefore he consented to this request, trusting much to Buckhurst's honor and to Caroline's prudence.—Even at this early age she had raised in the minds of those who knew her best a confidence in her judgment and discretion.

To this first declaration of love Caro-

line listened with a degree of composure, which astonished and mortified her lover. He had flattered himself that, at least, her vanity or pride would have been apparently gratified by her conquest.—But there was none of the flutter of vanity in her manner, nor any of the repressed satisfaction of pride. There was in her looks and words only simplicity and dignity.—She began by assuring Buckhurst, that she knew nothing of love, and that she wished, whilst she was still so young, to keep her affections disengaged. She said, that she was at present occupied happily in various ways, endeavoring to improve herself, and that she should be sorry to have her mind turned from these pursuits; she desired to secure time to compare and judge of her own tastes, and of the characters of others, before she should make any engagement, or form an attachment on which the happiness of her life must depend. She said, she was equally desirous to keep herself free, and to avoid

injuring the happiness of the man who had honored her by his preference: therefore she requested he would discontinue a pursuit, which she could not encourage him to hope would ever be successful.—Long before the time when she should think it prudent to marry, even if she were to meet with a character perfectly suited to hers, she hoped that her cousin, Buckhurst, would be united to some woman who would be able to return his affection.

The manner in which all this was said convinced Buckhurst, that she spoke the plain and exact truth. From the ease and frankness with which she had hitherto conversed with him, he had flattered himself, that it would not be difficult to prepossess her heart in his favor; but now, when he saw the same ease and simplicity unchanged in her manner, he was convinced that he had been mistaken.—He had still hopes that in time he might make an impression upon her; and he urged that she was not yet suf-

sciently acquainted with his character to be able to judge whether or not it would suit hers. She frankly told him all she thought of him, and in doing so impressed him with the conviction, that she had both discerned the merits and discovered the defects of his character; she gave him back a representation of himself, which he felt to be exactly just, and yet which struck him with all the force of novelty.

"It is myself,"—he exclaimed—"But I never knew myself till now."

He had such pleasure in hearing Caroline speak of him, that he wished even to hear her speak of his faults—of these he would, however, have been better pleased, if she had spoken with less calmness and indulgence.

"She is a great way from love as yet," thought Buckhurst.—"It is astonishing, that with powers and knowledge on all other subjects so far above her age, she should know so little even of the common language of sentiment—very ex-

traordinary, that with so much kindness, and such an amiable disposition, she should have so little sensibility."—

The novelty of this insensibility, and of this perfect simplicity, so unlike all he had observed in the manners and minds of other young ladies to whom he had been accustomed, had, however, a great effect upon her lover. The openness and unaffected serenity of Caroline's countenance at this moment appeared to him more charming, than any other thing he had ever beheld in the most finished coquet, or the most fashionable beauty.

What a divine creature she will be a few years hence! thought he.—The time will come, when Love may waken this Psyche!—And what glory it would be to me to produce to the world such perfection!—

With these mixed ideas of love and glory, Buckhurst took leave of Caroline; still he retained hope in spite of her calm and decided refusal. He knew the

power of constant attentions, and the display of ardent passion, to win the female heart. He trusted also in no slight degree to the reputation he had already acquired of being a favorite with the fair sex.

CHAPTER IV.

BUCKHURST FALCONER returned to Percy-Hall.

He came provided with something like an excuse—He had business—His father had desired him, to ask Mr. Percy to take charge of a box of family papers for him, as he apprehended, that, when he was absent from the country, his steward had not been as careful of them as he ought to have been.—

Mr. Percy willingly consented to take charge of the papers, but he desired, that, before they were left with him, Buckhurst should take a list of them.

Buckhurst was unprepared for this task.

His head was intent on a ball and on Caroline.—However he was obliged to undergo this labor, and when he had finished

it, Mr. Percy, who happened to be preparing some new leases of considerable farms, was so busy, in the midst of his papers, that there was no such thing as touching upon the subject of the ball.—At length the ladies of the family appeared, and all the parchments were at last out of the way—Buckhurst began upon his real business, and said he meant to delay going to town a few days longer, because there was to be a ball, early in the ensuing week,—"Nothing more natural," said Mr. Percy, "than to wish to go to a ball,—yet," added he, gravely, "when a man of honor gives his promise that nothing shall prevent him from commencing his studies immediately, I did not expect that the first temptation"—

"Oh! my dear Mr. Percy," said Buckhurst, endeavoring to laugh away the displeasure, or rather the disappointment which he saw in Mr. Percy's countenance—"A few days can make no difference."

"Only the difference of a term," said Mr. Percy, "and the difference between promising and performing.—You thought me unjust yesterday, when I told you that I feared you would prefer present amusement to future happiness."—

"Amusement!"— exclaimed Buckhurst, turning suddenly towards Caroline, "Do you imagine *that* is my object?"—then approaching her, he said in a low voice, "It is a natural mistake for you to make, Miss Caroline Percy—for you—who know nothing of love. Amusement!—It is not amusement that detains me—Can you think I would stay for a ball, unless I expected to meet you there?"

"Then I will not go," said Caroline,—"It would be coquetry to meet you there, when, as I thought, I had distinctly explained to you yesterday—"

"Oh! don't repeat that," interrupted Buckhurst, "a lady is never bound to remember what she said yesterday—especially if it were a cruel sentence; I

hope hereafter you will change your mind—Let me live upon hope."

"I never will give any false hopes," said Caroline, "and since I cannot add to your happiness, I will take care not to diminish it. I will not be the cause of your breaking your promise to my father: I will not be the means of tempting you to lower yourself in his opinion ——I will not go to this ball."

Buckhurst smiled, went on with some common-place raillery about cruelty, and took his leave, fancying that Caroline could not be in earnest in her threat, as he called it.—As his disobedience would have the excuse of *love*, he thought he might venture to transgress the letter of the promise.

When the time came he went to the ball, almost certain that Caroline would break her resolution, as he knew that she had never yet been at a public assembly, and it was natural that one so sure of being admired would be anxious to be seen.——His surprise and disappoint-

ment were great when no Caroline appeared.

He asked Rosamond if her sister was not well?

"Perfectly well"—

"Then why is not she here?"

"Don't you recollect her telling you that she would not come?"

"Yes: but I did not think she was in earnest."

"How little you know of Caroline," replied Rosamond, "if you imagine that either in trifles, or in matters of consequence, *she* would say one thing and do another."

"I feel," said Buckhurst, coloring, "what that emphasis on *she* means. But I did not think you would have reproached me so severely. *I thought* my cousin Rosamond was my friend."

"So I am—but not a friend to your faults."

"Surely it is no great crime in a young man to like going to a ball better than going to the Temple—But I am

really concerned," continued Buckhurst, "that I have deprived Miss Caroline Percy of the pleasure of being here to night . . . And this was to have been her first appearance in public . . . . I am quite sorry."

"Caroline is not at all impatient to appear in public; and as to the pleasure of being at a ball, it costs her little to sacrifice that, or any pleasure of her own, for the advantage of others."

"When Miss Caroline Percy said something about my falling in her father's opinion for such a trifle, I could not guess that she was serious."

"She does not," replied Rosamond, "think it a trifle to break a promise."

Buckhurst looked at his watch—"The mail-coach will pass through this town in an hour. It shall take me to London —Good bye—I will not stay another moment—I am gone. I wish I had gone yesterday—Pray, my dear, good Rosamond, say so for me to Caroline"——

At this moment a beautiful young lady, attended by a large party, entered the ball-room—Buckhurst stopped to inquire who she was.—

"Did you never see my sister before?" replied Colonel Hauton,—"Oh I must introduce you, and you shall dance with her."

"You do me a great deal of honor.... I shall be very happy.... that is, I should be extremely happy.... only unfortunately I am under a necessity of setting off immediately for London.... I'm afraid I shall be late for the mail.... Good night."

Buckhurst made an effort as he spoke, to pass on, but Colonel Hauton, bursting into one of his horse-laughs, held him fast by the arm, swore he must be drunk, for that he did not know what he was saying or doing.

"Commissioner Falconer, who now came up, whispered to Buckhurst, "Are you mad?——You can't refuse...., you'll affront for ever"....

"I can't help it," said Buckhurst, —I'm sorry for it—I cannot help it."— He still kept on his way towards the door.

"But," expostulated the Commissioner, following him out,—"you can surely stay—be introduced, and pay your compliments to the young lady .... you are time enough for the mail. Don't affront people for nothing, who may be of the greatest use to you."

"But, my dear father, I don't want people to be of use to me."

"Well, at any rate turn back just to see what a charming creature Miss Hauton is!—Such an entrée—So much the air of a woman of fashion!—Every eye rivetted.—The whole room in admiration of her?"—

"I did not see any thing remarkable about her," said Buckhurst, turning back to look at her again,—"If you think I should affront .... I would not really affront Hauton, who has always been so civil to me .... I'll go and be intro-

duced and pay my compliments, since you say it is necessary—But I shall not stay five minutes."

Buckhurst returned to be introduced to Miss Hauton. This young lady was so beautiful that she would, in all probability, have attracted general attention, even if she had not been the sister of a man of Colonel Hauton's fortune, and the niece of a nobleman of Lord Oldborough's political consequence; but undoubtedly these circumstances much increased the power of her charms over the imaginations of her admirers. All the gentlemen at this ball were unanimous in declaring that she was a most *fascinating* creature. Buckhurst Falconer and Godfrey Percy were introduced to her nearly at the same time.—Godfrey asked her to dance—and Buckhurst could not help staying to see how she danced—She danced so gracefully, that while he thought he had stayed only five minutes, he delayed a quarter of an hour. Many gentlemen were ambitious of the honor

of Miss Hauton's hand for the next two dances. But to their disappointment she declined dancing any more: and though Buckhurst Falconer had determined not to have stayed nor to dance with her, yet an undefinable perverse curiosity induced him to delay a few minutes, to determine whether she conversed as well as she danced. The sound of her voice was sweet and soft, and there was an air of languor in her whole person and manner, with an apparent indifference to general admiration, which charmed Godfrey Percy, especially as he perceived that she could be animated by his conversation. To Buckhurst's wit she listened with politeness, but obviously without interest.—Buckhurst looked at his watch again—but it was now too late for the mail.—Rosamond was surprised to see him still in the ball-room.—He laid all the blame on his father, and pleaded that he was detained by parental orders which he could not disobey.—He sat beside Rosamond at

supper, and used much eloquence to convince her, that he had obeyed against his will.

In the mean time Godfrey, seated next to his fair partner, became every moment more and more sensible of the advantages of his situation. Towards the end of supper, when the buz of general conversation increased, it happened that somebody near Miss Hauton spoke of a marriage that was likely to take place in the fashionable world, and all who thought themselves, or who wished to be thought *good authorities*, began to settle *how* it would be, and *when* it would be: but a gentleman of Godfrey's acquaintance, who sat next to him, said, in a low voice, "*It will never be.*"—"Why?" said Godfrey.—The gentleman answered in a whisper,

"There is an insuperable objection—*The mother* . . . . don't you recollect? . . . . the mother was a *divorcée*, and no man of sense would venture to marry the daughter—"

"No certainly," said Godfrey—"I did not know the fact."—

He turned, as he finished speaking, to ask Miss Hauton if she would permit him to help her to some thing that stood before him, but to his surprise and alarm he perceived that she was pale, trembling, and scarcely able to support herself.—He, for the first moment, thought only that she was taken suddenly ill, and he was going to call Lady Oldborough's attention to her indisposition—but Miss Hauton stopped him, and said in a low tremulous voice—"Take no notice"—He then poured out a glass of water, put it within her reach, turned away in obedience to her wishes, and sat in such a manner as to screen her from observation. A confused recollection now came across his mind of his having heard many years ago, when he was a child, of the divorce of some Lady Anne Hauton, and the truth occurred to him, that this was Miss Hauton's mother, and that Miss Hauton had overheard the whisper.—

In a few moments, anxious to see whether she had recovered, and yet afraid to distress her by his attention, he half turned his head, and looking down at her plate, asked if she was better.—

"Quite well, thank you"—

He then raised his eyes, and looking as unconcernedly as he could, resumed his former attitude, and began some trifling conversation, but whatever effort he made to appear the same as before, there was some constraint, or some difference in his voice and manner, which the young lady perceived—her voice immediately changed and faltered—he spoke quickly—both spoke at the same time, without knowing what either said or what they said themselves.—Their eyes met, and both were silent.—Miss Hauton blushed deeply. He saw that his conjecture was right, and she saw, by Godfrey's countenance, that her secret was discovered,—her eyes fell—she grew pale and instantly fainted. Lady Oldborough came to her assistance, but she

was too helpless a fine lady to be of the least use: she could only say that—"It must be the heat of the room, and that she should faint herself in another moment."

Godfrey whispered to his mother—and Miss Hauton was carried into the open air. Lady Oldborough and her smelling bottle followed. Godfrey, leaving the young lady with them, returned quickly to the supper-room, to prevent any one from intruding upon her. He met Buckhurst Falconer and Colonel Hauton at the door, and stopped them with assurances, that Miss Hauton had all the assistance she could want.

"I'll tell you what she wants"—cried the Colonel to Buckhurst—"a jaunt to Cheltenham, which would do her, and me too, a d—d deal of good—for now the races are over, what the devil shall we do with ourselves here. I'll rattle Maria off the day after to morrow in my phaeton. No—Buckhurst, my good fellow, I'll drive you in the phaeton, and I'll make

Lady Oldborough take Maria in the coach."

Godfrey Percy, who, as he passed, could not avoid hearing this invitation, did not stay to learn Buckhurst's answer, but went instantly into the room. No one, not even the gentleman whose whisper had occasioned it, had the least suspicion of the real cause of Miss Hauton's indisposition. Lady Oldborough had assigned as the occasion of the young lady's illness "the heat of the room," and an old medical dowager was eager to establish that "it was *owing* to some strawberry ice, as to her certain knowledge ice, in some shape or other, was the cause of most of the mischief in the world."

Whilst the partisans of heat and ice were still battling, and whilst the dancers had quite forgotten Miss Hauton, and every thing, but themselves, the young lady returned to the room.——Godfrey went to order Mrs. Percy's carriage, and the Percy family left the ball.

When Godfrey found himself in the carriage with his own family, he began eagerly to talk of Miss Hauton; he was anxious to know what all and each thought of her, in general, and in particular, he talked so much of her, and seemed so much surprised that any body could wish to talk or think of any thing else, that Mrs. Percy could not help smiling. Mr. Percy, leaning back in the carriage, said that he felt inclined to sleep.

"To sleep!"—repeated Godfrey—"Is it possible that you can be sleepy, Sir?"

"Very possible, my dear son—it is past four o'clock I believe."

Godfrey was silent for some minutes, and he began to think over every word and look that had passed between him and Miss Hauton. He had been only amused with her conversation, and charmed by her grace and beauty in the beginning of the evening; but the sensibility she had afterwards shown had touched him so much, that he was ex-

tremely anxious to interest his father in her favor. He explained the cause of her fainting, and asked whether she was not much to be pitied.—All pitied her—and Godfrey, encouraged by this pity, went on to prove that she ought not to be blamed for her mother's faults, that nothing could be more unjust and cruel than to think ill of the innocent daughter, because her mother had been imprudent.

"But, Godfrey"—said Rosamond—"you seem to be answering some one who has attacked Miss Hauton—who are you contending with?"

"With himself"—said Mr. Percy—"don't you see that he is contending with himself? His prudence tells him, that the gentleman was quite right in saying that no man of sense would marry the daughter of a woman, who had conducted herself ill, and yet he wishes to make an exception to the general rule, in favor of pretty Miss Hauton."

"Pretty! my dear father, she is a great deal more than pretty: if she were

only pretty I should not be so much interested about her. But putting her quite out of the question, I do not agree with the general principle that a man should not marry the daughter of a woman who has conducted herself ill."

"I think you did agree with it till you knew that it applied to Miss Hauton's case"—said Mr. Percy—"as well as I remember, Godfrey, I heard you once answer on a similar occasion! No, no—I will have nothing to do with any of the daughters of that mother—black cats have black kittens—or black dogs have black puppies, I forget which, you said."

"Whichever it was, I am ashamed of having quoted such a vulgar proverb"—said Godfrey.

"It may be a vulgar proverb, but I doubt whether it be a vulgar error—said Mr. Percy, "I have great faith in the *wisdom of nations*. So much so in the present instance, that I own I would rather a son of mine were to marry a well-conducted farmer's daughter of *honest paren-*

tage, than the daughter of an ill-conducted lady of rank or fashion. The farmer's daughter might be trained into a gentlewoman, and might make my son at least a faithful wife, which is more than he could expect, or than I should expect, from the young lady, who had early seen the example of what was bad, and whose predispositions would be provided with the excuse of the old song."

Godfrey took fire at this, and exclaimed against the injustice of a doctrine, which would render wretched for life many young women, who might possess every amiable and estimable quality, and who could never remedy the misfortune of their birth. Godfrey urged, that whilst this would render the good miserable, it would be the most probable means of driving the weak from despair into vice.

Rosamond eagerly joined her brother's side of the question—Mr. Percy besought a patient hearing from his children, though he knew, he said, "that he must appear one of the 'fathers with

flinty hearts.' "—He protested, that he felt great compassion for the unfortunate individuals, as much as a man, who was not in love with any of them, could reasonably be expected to feel.

"But now"—continued Mr. Percy—"granting that all the consequences, which Godfrey has predicted, were to follow from my doctrine, yet I am inclined to believe, that society would upon the whole be the gainer by such severity, or, as I am willing to allow it to be, such apparent injustice. The adherence to this principle would be the misery, perhaps the ruin, of a few, but would I think tend to the safety and happiness of so many, that the evil would be nothing in comparison to the good. The certainty of shame descending to the daughters would be a powerful means of deterring mothers from ill conduct; and might probably operate more effectually to restrain licentiousness in high life than heavy damages, or the now transient disgrace of public trial and divorce. As to

the apparent injustice of punishing children for the faults of their parents, it should be considered, that in most other cases children suffer discredit more or less for the faults of their parents of whatever kind; and that, on the other hand, they enjoy the advantage of the good characters which their parents establish. This *must* be so from the necessary effect of experience, and from the nature of human belief, except in cases where passion operates to destroy or suspend the power of reason . . . . ."

"That is not my case, I assure you, Sir"—interrupted Godfrey.

Mr. Percy smiled and continued:—"It appears to me highly advantageous, that *character*, in general, should descend to posterity as well as riches or honors, which are, in fact, often the representations, or consequences, in other forms, of different parts of character, industry—talents—courage.—For instance, in the lower ranks of life it is a common saying, that a good name is the richest legacy a

woman can leave her daughter. This idea should be impressed more fully than it is upon the higher classes. At present money too frequently forms a compensation for every thing in high life. It is not uncommon to see the natural daughters of men of rank, or of large fortune, portioned so magnificently, either with solid gold, or promised *family protection*, that their origin by the mother's side, and the character of the mother, are quite forgotten. Can this be advantageous to good morals? Surely a mother living in open defiance of the virtue of her sex should not see her illegitimate offspring instead of being her shame become her glory.—On the contrary, nothing could tend more to prevent the ill conduct of women in high life, than the certainty that men who, from their fortune, birth, and character, might be deemed the most desirable matches, would shun alliances with the daughters of women of tainted reputation."—

Godfrey eagerly declared his contempt

for those men, who married, for money or ambition, either illegitimate or legitimate daughters. "He should be sorry"—he said—"to do any thing that would countenance vice, which ought to be put out of countenance by all means—if possible. But he was not the guardian of public morals; and even if he were, he should still think it unjust, that the innocent should suffer for the guilty. That for his own part, if he could put his father's disapprobation out of the question, he should easily settle his mind, and overcome all objections in a *prudential* point of view to marrying an amiable woman, who had had the misfortune to have a worthless mother.

Mrs. Percy had not yet given her opinion—all eyes turned towards her. As usual, she spoke with persuasive gentleness and good sense; she marked where each had, in the warmth of argument, said more than they intended, and she seized the just medium by which all might be conciliated. She said that she thought

the important point to be considered was, what the *education* of the daughter had been; on this a prudent man would form his opinion, not on the mere accident of her birth. He would inquire whether the girl had lived with the ill-conducted mother—had been in situations to be influenced by her example, or by that of the company which she kept. If such had been the case, Mrs. Percy declared she thought it would be imprudent and wrong to marry the daughter.—But if the daughter had been separated in early childhood from the mother, had never been exposed to the influence of her example, had, on the contrary, been educated carefully in strict moral and religious principles, it would be cruel, because unnecessary, to object to an alliance with such a woman.—The objection would appear inconsistent, as well as unjust, if made by those who professed to believe in the unlimited power of education.

Godfrey rubbed his hands with delight

—Mr. Percy smiled, and acknowledged that he was compelled to admit the truth and justice of this statement.

"Pray do you know, Godfrey," said Rosamond, "whether Miss Hauton lived with her mother, or was educated by her?"

"I cannot tell," said Godfrey, "but I will make it my business to find out.—At all events, my dear Madam," continued he, "a child cannot decide by whom she will be educated. It is not her fault if her childhood be passed with a mother who is no fit guardian for her."

"I acknowledge," said Mrs. Percy, "that is her misfortune."

"And would you make it an irreparable misfortune," said Godfrey in an expostulatory tone—"my dear mother . . . . . only consider."

"My dear son, I do consider"—said Mrs. Percy—"but I cannot give up the point of education. I should be very sorry to see a son of mine married to a

woman, who had been in this unfortunate predicament.—But"—added Mrs. Percy, after a few minutes' silence—"if from the time her own will and judgment could be supposed to act, she had chosen for her companions respectable and amiable persons, and had conducted herself with uniform propriety and discretion, I think I might be brought to allow of an exception to my general principle?"—She looked at Mr. Percy.——

"Undoubtedly"—said Mr. Percy—"exceptions must not merely be allowed, but will force themselves in favor of superior merit, of extraordinary excellence, which will rise above every unfavorable circumstance in any class, in any condition of life in which it may exist, which will throw off any stigma, however disgraceful, counteract all prepossession, however potent, rise against all power of depression, redeem a family, redeem a race."

"Now, father, you speak like yourself"—cried Godfrey—"this is all I ask, all I wish."—

"And here"—continued Mr. Percy—"is an adequate motive for a good and great mind—yes *great*—for I believe there are great minds in the female as well as in the male part of the creation—I say, here is an adequate motive to excite a woman of a good and great mind to exert herself to struggle against the misfortunes of her birth."

"For instance," said Rosamond, "my sister Caroline is just the kind of woman, who, if she had been one of these unfortunate daughters, would have made herself an exception."

"Very likely," said Mr. Percy, laughing, "but why you should go so far out of your way to make an unfortunate daughter of poor Caroline, and why you should picture to yourself, as Dr. Johnson would say, what would be probable in an impossible situation, I cannot conceive, except for the pleasure of exercising, as you do upon most occasions, a fine romantic imagination."

"At all events *I* am perfectly satisfied,"

said Godfrey. "Since you admit of exceptions, Sir, I agree with you entirely."

"No, not entirely. I am sure you cannot agree with me entirely, until I admit Miss Hauton to be one of my exceptions."

"That will come in time, if she deserve it," said Mrs. Percy.

Godfrey thanked his mother with great warmth, and observed, "that she was always the most indulgent of friends."

"But remember my *if*," said Mrs. Percy; "I know nothing of Miss Hauton at present, except that she is very pretty, and, that she has engaging manners.—Do you, my dear Godfrey?"

"Yes, indeed, Ma'am, I know a great deal more of her."

"Did you ever see her before this night?"

"Never," said Godfrey.—

"And at a ball!" said Mrs. Percy; "you must have wonderful penetration

into character.—But Cupid, though blindfold, can see more at a single glance, than a philosophic eye can discover with the most minute examination."

"But Cupid out of the question, let me ask you, mother," said Godfrey, "whether you do not think Miss Hauton has a great deal of sensibility.—You saw that there was no affectation in her fainting."—

"None, none," said Mrs. Percy.

"There, father!" cried Godfrey, in an exulting tone; "and sensibility is the foundation of every thing that is most amiable and charming, of every grace, of every virtue in woman."

"Yes,"—said Mr. Percy, "and perhaps of some of their errors and vices. It depends upon how it is governed, whether sensibility be a curse or a blessing to it's possessor, and to society."

"A curse!" cried Godfrey,—"yes, if a woman be doomed . . . ."

"Come, come, my dear Godfrey,"—interrupted Mr. Percy, "do not let us talk any more upon the subject just now, because you are too much interested to reason coolly."

Rosamond then took her turn to talk of what was uppermost in her thoughts. —Buckhurst Falconer, whom she alternately blamed and pitied, accused and defended—Sometimes rejoicing that Caroline had rejected his suit, sometimes pitying him for his disappointment, and repeating that with such talents, frankness, and generosity of disposition, it was much to be regretted that he had not that rectitude of principle, and steadiness of character, which alone could render him worthy of Caroline. Then passing from compassion for the son, to indignation against the father, she observed, "that Commissioner Falconer seemed determined to counteract all that was good in his son's disposition, that he actually did every thing in his power, to encourage Buckhurst in a

taste for dissipation as it seemed, on purpose to keep him in a state of dependance, and to enslave him to the *great*."

"I hope, with all my heart, I hope," continued Rosamond, "that Buckhurst will have sense and steadiness enough to refuse, but I heard his father supporting that foolish Colonel Hauton's persuasions, and urging his poor son to go with those people to Cheltenham.—Now, if once he gets into that extravagant, dissipated set, he will be ruined for ever,—Adieu to all hopes of him.—He will no more go to the bar than I shall —he will think of nothing but pleasure; he will run in debt again, and then farewell principle, and with principle, farewell all hopes of him.—But I think he will have sense and steadiness enough to resist his father, and to refuse to accompany this profligate patron, Colonel Hauton.—Godfrey, what is your opinion? Do you think Buckhurst will go?"

"I do not know," replied Godfrey—"in his place I should find it very easy, but in my own case, I confess, I should feel it difficult to refuse, if I were pressed to join a party of pleasure with Miss Hauton."

CHAPTER V.

GODFREY Percy went in the morning to inquire after the health of his fair partner.—This was only a common civility.—On his way thither, he overtook and joined a party of gentlemen, who were also going to Clermont-Park. They entered into conversation and talked of the preceding night—one of the gentlemen, an elderly man, who had not been at the ball, happened to be acquainted with Miss Hauton, and with her family. Godfrey heard from him all the particulars respecting Lady Anne Hauton, and was thrown into a melancholy reverie by learning, that Miss Hauton had been educated by this mother, and had always lived with her till her Ladyship's death, which happened about two years before this time.—After receiving this

intelligence, Godfrey heard little more of the conversation that passed till he reached Clermont-Park.—A number of young people were assembled in the music room practising for a concert.—Miss Hauton was at the piano-forte, when he entered the room; she was sitting with her back to the door, surrounded by a crowd of amateurs. She did not see him, he stood behind listening to her singing. Her voice was delightful, but he was surprised, and not pleased, by the choice of her songs. She was singing, with some other high-bred young ladies, songs, which to use the gentlest expression were rather too *anacreontic*. Songs, which though sanctioned by fashion, were not such as a young lady of taste would prefer, or such as a man of delicacy would like to hear from his sister or his wife. They were nevertheless highly applauded by all the audience, except by Godfrey, who remained silent behind the young lady. In the fluctuation of the crowd he was pressed

nearer and nearer to her chair. As she finished singing a fashionable air, she heard a sigh from the person behind her.

"That's your favorite, I think?" said she, turning round, and looking up .... "Mr. Percy! .... I .... I thought it was Mr. Falconer,"—Face—neck—hands, suddenly blushed; she stooped for a music-book, and searched for some time in that attitude for she knew not what, whilst all the gentlemen officiously offered their services, and begged only to know for which book she was looking.—

"Come, come, Maria," cried Colonel Hauton, "What the d—— are you about? .... can't you give us another of these? You can't be better.—Come, you're keeping Miss Drakelow."

"Go on, Miss Drakelow, if you please without me."—

"Impossible.—Come, come, Maria, what the deuse are you at?"

Miss Hauton, afraid to refuse her bro-

ther—afraid to provoke the comments of the company, began to sing, or rather to attempt to sing . . . . her voice faltered . . . . she cleared her throat and began again . . . . worse still, she was out of tune . . . . She affected to laugh.—Then pushing back her chair, she rose, drew her veil over her face, and said, "I have sung till I have no voice left . . . . Does nobody walk this morning?"—

"No, no," said Colonel Hauton, "who the deuse would be *bored*, with being broiled at this time of day.—Miss Drakelow . . . . Miss Chatterton, give us some more music I beseech you, for I like music better in a morning than at night . . . . The mornings, when one can't go out, are so confoundedly long and heavy."

The young ladies played, and Miss Hauton seated herself apart from the group of musicians, upon a *bergère*, leaning on her hand, in a melancholy attitude. Buckhurst Falconer followed and sat down beside her, endeavoring to entertain her with some witty anecdote.——

She smiled with effort, listened with painful attention, and the moment the anecdote was ended, her eyes wandered out of the window. Buckhurst rose—vacated his seat, and before any of the other gentlemen who had gathered round could avail themselves of that envied place; Miss Hauton, complaining of the intolerable heat, removed nearer to the window, to an ottoman, one half of which was already so fully occupied by a large dog of her brother's, that she was in no danger from any other intruder. Some of the gentlemen, who were not blessed with much sagacity, followed, to talk to her of the beauty of the dog which she was stroking, but to an eulogium upon it's long ears, and even to a quotation from Shakspeare about dewlaps, she listened with so vacant an air, that her followers gave up the point, and successively retired, leaving her to her meditations. Godfrey, who had kept aloof, had in the mean time been looking at some books, that lay on a reading

table.—*Maria Hauton* was written in the first page of several of them.—All were novels—some French, and some German, of a sort which he did not like.

"What have you there, Mr. Percy?" said Miss Hauton.—"Nothing worth your notice, I am afraid—I dare say you do not like novels."

"Pardon me, I like some novels very much."—

"Which?" said Miss Hauton, rising and approaching the table.

"All that are just representations of life and manners, or of the human heart," said Godfrey, "provided they are . . . . . ."

"Ah! the human heart!" interrupted Miss Hauton—"The heart only can understand the heart—who, in modern times, can describe the human heart?"

"Not to speak of foreigners—Miss Burney—Mrs. Opie—Mrs. Inchbald"—said Godfrey.

"True—and yet I . . . . and yet . . ."

said Miss Hauton, panting, and sighing.—

"And yet that was not what I was thinking of"—she should have said, had she finished her sentence with the truth; but this not being convenient, she left it unfinished, and began a new one, with—"Some of these novels are sad trash—I hope Mr. Godfrey Percy will not judge of my taste by them. That would be condemning me for the crimes of my bookseller, who will send us down every thing new that comes out."

Godfrey disclaimed the idea of condemning, or blaming, Miss Hauton's taste—"he could not," he said, "be so presumptuous, so impertinent."—

"So then," said she, "Mr. Godfrey Percy is like all the rest of his sex, and I must not expect to hear the truth from him."—She paused—and looked at a print which he was examining.—"I would, however, rather have him speak severely, than think hardly of me."

"He has no right to speak, and cer-

tainly no inclination to think hardly of Miss Hauton," replied Godfrey, gravely, but with an emotion, which he in vain endeavored to suppress. To change the conversation, he asked her opinion about a figure in the print. She took out her glass, and stooped to look quite closely at it.—"Before you utterly condemn me," continued she, speaking in a low voice,—"consider how fashion silences one's better taste and feelings, and how difficult it is when all around one . . . ."

Miss Chatterton, Miss Drakelow, and some officers of their suite came up at this instant; a deputation they said, to bring Miss Hauton back, to favor them with another song, as she must now have recovered her voice.—

"No—no—excuse me," said she, smiling languidly, "I beg not to be pressed any more.—I am really not well, I absolutely cannot sing any more this morning.—I have already sung so much . . . . *too much*"—added she, when the deputation had retired, so that the last words

could be heard only by him, for whom they were intended.

Though Miss Hauton's apologizing thus for her conduct, and making a young gentleman, with whom she was but just acquainted, the judge of her actions, might be deemed a still further proof of her indiscretion, yet the condescension was so flattering, and it appeared such an instance of an ingenuous disposition, that Godfrey was sensibly touched by it. He followed the fair Maria to her ottoman, from which she banished Pompey the great, to make room for him. The recollection of his father's warning words, however, came across Godfrey's mind; he bowed an answer to a motion, that invited him to the dangerous seat, and continued standing with an air of safe respect.

"I hope you will have the goodness to express to Mrs. Percy, how much I felt her kindness to me last night .... when .... when I wanted it so much.—There is something so soothing, so gen-

tle, so indulgent about Mrs. Percy, so *loveable!*"

"She is very good, very indulgent, indeed," said Godfrey, in a tone of strong affection,—"very *loveable* . . . . . that is the exact word."

"I fear it is not English,"—said Miss Hauton.

"*Il mérite bien de l'être,*"—said Godfrey.

A profound silence ensued.—Colonel Hauton came up to this pair, while they were still silent, and with their eyes fixed upon the ground.

"D——d agreeable you two seem," cried the Colonel.—Buckhurst, you have always so much to say for yourself, do help your cousin here,—I'm sure I know how to pity him, for many a time, the morning after a ball, I've been with my partner in just as bad a quandary—without a word to throw to a dog—"

"Impossible, surely Colonel, when you had such a fine animal as this," said Godfrey, caressing Pompey, who lay at

his feet.—"Where did you get this handsome dog?"—

The Colonel then entered into the history of Pompey the great. "I was speaking," said Miss Hauton, "to Mr. Godfrey Percy, of his family . . . . . relations of yours, Mr. Falconer, are not they? . . . . He has another sister, I think, some one told me, a beautiful sister Caroline, who was not at the ball last night?"

"Yes,"—said Buckhurst, "who looked at this instant also to the dog for assistance,—"Pompey!—Pompey!—poor fellow!"—

"Is Miss Caroline Percy like her mother?"—

"No."—

"Like her father—or her brother?"—

"Not particularly—Will you honor me with any commands for town?—Colonel, have you any?—I'm just going off with Major Clay,"—said Buckhurst.

"Not you, indeed,"—cried the Colonel, "your father has made you over to me, and I won't give you leave of ab-

sence, my good fellow.—You're under orders for Cheltenham to morrow, my boy——no reply, Sir—no arguing with your commanding-officer.—You've no more to do, but to tell Clay to go without you"—

"And now," continued the Colonel, returning to Godfrey Percy, after Bucklurst had left the room, "what hinders you from making one of our party?—you can't do better. There's Maria and Lady Oldborough were both wishing it at breakfast—Maria, can't you say something?"

Maria's eyes said more than the Colonel could have said, if he had spoken for ever.—

"But, perhaps, Mr. Godfrey Percy may have other engagements," said she, with a timid persuasive tone, which Godfrey found it extremely difficult to resist.—

"Bellamy! where the d—l do you come from? . . . Very glad to see you, faith . . ." cried the Colonel, going for-

ward to shake hands with a very handsome man, who just then entered the room.—"Maria," said Colonel Hauton, turning to his sister, "don't you know Bellamy?... Bellamy!" repeated he, coming close to her, whilst the gentleman was paying his compliments to Lady Oldborough, "Captain Bellamy, with whom you used to waltz every night, you know, at... what's the name of the woman's?——"

"I never waltzed with him but once ... or twice, that I remember," said Miss Hauton,—"and then because you insisted upon it."

"I!—Well, I did very right if I did, because you were keeping all the world waiting, and I knew you intended to do it at last—so I thought you might as well do it at first.—But I don't know what's the matter with you this morning—we must drive a little spirit into you at Cheltenham."—

Captain Bellamy came up to pay his

respects, or rather his compliments, to Miss Hauton,—there was no respect in his manner, but the confidence of one who had been accustomed to be well received.

"She has not been well—fainted last night at a ball—is *hipped* this morning—but we'll get her spirits up again when we have her at Cheltenham.—We shall be a famous dashing party . . . I have been beating up for recruits all day . . . here's one," said Colonel Hauton, turning to Godfrey Percy.—

"Excuse me," said Godfrey, "I am engaged—I am obliged to join my regiment immediately."—He bowed gravely to Miss Hauton—wished her a good morning, and, without trusting himself to another look, retreated, saying to himself:

"Sir, she's yours—you have brush'd from the grape
it's soft blue;
"From the rose-bud you've shaken it's tremulous
dew;
"What you've touch'd you may take—Pretty
Waltzer, adieu."

From this moment he mentioned Miss Hauton's name no more in his own family. His whole mind now seemed, and not only seemed, but was full of military thoughts. So quickly in youth do different and opposite trains of ideas and emotions succeed to each other; and so easy it is, by a timely exercise of reason and self-command, to prevent a *fancy* from becoming a passion. Perhaps, if his own happiness alone had been in question, Godfrey might not have shown precisely the same prudence. But on this occasion, his generosity and honor assisted his discretion. He plainly saw, that Miss Hauton was not exactly a woman whom he could wish to make his wife—and he was too honorable to trifle with her affections. He was not such a coxcomb as to imagine that, in the course of so slight an acquaintance, he could have made any serious impression on this young lady's heart: yet he could not but perceive that she had distinguished him from the first hour he

was introduced to her; and he was aware, that with her extreme sensibility, and an unoccupied imagination, she might rapidly form for him an attachment, that might lead to mutual misery.

Mr. Percy rejoiced in his son's honorable conduct, and he was particularly pleased by Godfrey's determining to join his regiment immediately. Mr. Percy thought it advantageous for the eldest son of a man of fortune to be absent for some years from his home, from his father's estate, tenants and dependants, to see something of the world, to learn to estimate himself and others, and thus to have means of becoming a really respectable, enlightened, and useful *country gentleman*—not one of those booby squires, born only to consume the fruits of the earth, who spend their lives in coursing, shooting, hunting, carousing,* "who eat, drink, sleep, die, and rot in obli-

* See an eloquent address to country gentlemen, in Young's Annals of Agriculture, vol. i. last page.

vion." He thought it in these times the duty of every young heir to serve a few years, that he might be as able, as willing, to join in the defence of his country, if necessary. Godfrey went, perhaps, beyond his father's ideas upon this subject, for he had an ardent desire to go into the army as a profession, and almost regretted, that his being an eldest son might induce him to forego it after a few campaigns.

Godfrey did not enter into the army from the puerile vanity of wearing a red coat and an epaulette; nor to save himself the trouble of pursuing his studies; nor because he thought the army a *good lounge*, or a happy escape from parental control; nor yet did he consider the military profession as a mercenary speculation, in which he was to calculate the chance of getting *into the shoes*, or over the head, of Lieutenant A—— or Captain B——. He had higher objects; he had a noble ambition to distinguish himself. Not in mere technical phrase,

or to grace a bumper toast, but in truth, and as a governing principle of action, he felt *zeal for the interests of the service.* ——Yet Godfrey was not without faults; and of these his parents, fond as they were of him, were well aware.

Mrs. Percy, in particular, felt much anxiety, when the moment fixed for his departure approached; when she considered that he was now to mix with companions very different from those with whom he had hitherto associated, and to be placed in a situation where calmness of temper and prudence would be more requisite than military courage, or generosity of disposition.—

"Well, my dear mother," cried Godfrey, when he came to take leave. "Fare you well—if I live, I hope I shall distinguish myself; and if I fall—

. . . . . .

"How sleep the brave, who sink to rest?" . . . .

. . . . . .

"God bless you, my dear son!" said his mother. She seemed to have much

more to say, but, unable at that moment to express it, she turned to her husband, who knew all she thought and felt.

"God bless you, my boy!" said Mr. Percy, "remember always, that your mother and I have great hopes of you, and some fears."

"Fears!" exclaimed Godfrey,—"who talks of fear to a soldier?"

"Stay, my young soldier," answered his father, "you do not understand the nature of my fears.——I fear that you will be too jealous of honor, too apt to take offence."

"Oh no, Sir, I despise, bullying, quarrelsome soldiers."

"On the other hand, I fear that your sociable confiding temper should make you the dupe of worthless companions."

"Oh no, Sir, I shall never have any worthless companions, I promise you."

"I fear," continued his father, "that the same enthusiasm which makes you think your own country the best country upon earth, your own family the best

family in that country, and your own regiment the best regiment in the service —all which is becoming a good patriot, a good son, and a good soldier,—should go a step . . . a dangerous step farther, and should degenerate into party-spirit, or what the French call *esprit-de-corps*"—

"The French!" cried Godfrey,—"Oh! hang the French!—never mind what the French call it, Sir!"—

"And degenerating into party-spirit, or what is called *esprit-de-corps*," resumed Mr. Percy, smiling,—"should, in spite of your more enlarged views of the military art and science, and your knowledge of all that Alexander and Cæsar, and Marshal Saxe and Turenne, and the Duke of Marlborough and Lord Peterborough, ever said or did, persuade you to believe, that your brother officers, whoever they may be, are the greatest men that ever existed, and that their opinions should rule the world, or at least, should govern you."—

"More than all the rest, I fear, my

dear Godfrey," interposed Mrs. Percy, "that, when you do not find the world so good as you imagine it to be, you will, by quarrelling with it directly, make it worse to you than it really is. If you discover that merit is not always immediately rewarded or promoted, your indignation, and, ... shall I say it, impatience of spirit will excite you to offend your superiors in station, and, by these means, retard your own advancement."

"And, surely, if I should be treated with injustice, you would not have me bear it patiently?" cried Godfrey, turning quickly.

"In the first place, stay till it happens before you take fire," said his father; "and, in the next place, remember that patience, and deference to his superiors, form an indispensable part of a young soldier's merit."

"Ah! my dear," said Mrs. Percy, looking up at her son anxiously, "if even at this instant, even with us, even

at the bare imagination of injustice, you take offence, I fear . . . . I very much fear . . . . ." said she, laying her hand upon his arm.—

" My dearest mother," said Godfrey, in a softened tone, taking his mother's hand in the most respectful and tender manner, " fear nothing for me. I will be as patient as a lamb, rather than be a source of anxiety to you."—

" And now, my good friends, fare ye well," said Godfrey, turning to take leave of his sisters.

" No tears, no tragedy," said Mr. Percy.—" There, he has kissed you all now, let him go.

So the young soldier departed. His last words, as he got upon his horse, were to Caroline.

" Caroline, you will be married before I return."——

But to descend to the common affairs of life. Whilst all these visits and balls, coquettings and separations, had been

going on, the Dutch carpenters had been repairing the wreck; and, from time to time, complaints had been made of them by Mr. Percy's old steward. The careful steward's indignation was first excited by their forgetting every night to lock a certain gate, with the key of which they had been intrusted. Then they had wasted his master's timber, and various tools were missing—they had been twice as long as they ought to have been in finishing their work, and now, when the wind was fair, —the whole ship's crew impatient to sail, and not above half a day's work wanting, the carpenters were smoking and drinking, instead of putting their hands to the business. The Dutch carpenter, who was at this moment more than half intoxicated, answered the steward's just reproaches with much insolence. Mr. Percy, feeling that his hospitality and good nature were encroached upon and abused, declared that he would no longer

permit the Dutchmen to have the use of his house, and ordered his steward to see that they quitted it immediately.—

The Dutch carpenters, and all belonging to them, consequently left the place in a few hours; whatever remained to be done to the vessel was finished that evening, and she sailed, to the great joy of her whole crew, and of Mr. Percy's steward, who, when he brought the news of this event to his master, protested that he was as glad as if any body had given him twenty golden guineas, that he had at last got safely rid of these ill-mannered drunken fellows, who, after all his master had done for them, never so much as said "thank you," and who had wasted and spoiled more by their carelessness than their heads were worth.

Alas! he little knew at that moment how much more his master was to lose by their carelessness, and he rejoiced too soon at having got *rid* of them.

In the middle of the night the family were alarmed by the cry of Fire!—A

fire had broken out in the out-house, which had been lent to the Dutchmen; before it was discovered, the roof was in a blaze; the wind unfortunately blew towards a hay-rick, which was soon in flames, and the burning hay spread the fire to a considerable distance, till it caught the veranda at the east wing of the dwelling-house. One of the servants, who slept in that part of the house, was awakened by the light from the burning veranda, but by the time the alarm was given, and before the family could get out of their rooms, the flames had reached Mr. Percy's study, which contained his most valuable papers. Mr. Percy, whose voice all his family, in the midst of their terror and confusion, obeyed, directed with great presence of mind what should be done by each. He sent one to open a cistern of water at the top of the house, and to let it flow over the roof, another to tear down the trellice next the part that was on fire; others he despatched for barrows-full of wet

mortar from a heap which was in a back yard near the house; others he stationed in readiness to throw the mortar where it was most needful to extinguish the flames, or to prevent their communicating with the rest of the building. He went himself to the place where the fire raged with the greatest violence, whilst his wife and daughters were giving out from the study the valuable papers, which, as he directed, were thrown in one heap in the lawn, at a sufficient distance from the house to prevent any danger of their being burnt—most of them were in tin cases that were easily removed—the loose papers and books were put into baskets, and covered with wet blankets, so that the pieces of the burning trellice, which fell upon them as they were carried out, did them no injury. It was wonderful with what silence, order, and despatch, this went on, whilst three females, instead of shrieking and fainting, combined to do what was useful and prudent. In spite

of all Mr. Percy's exertions, however, the flames burst in from the burning trellice through one of the windows of the study, before the men could tear down the shutters and architrave from the window, as he had ordered. The fire caught the wood-work, and ran along the book-shelves on one side of the wall with terrible rapidity—so that the whole room was in a few minutes, in a blaze . . . They were forced to leave it before they had carried out many of the books, and whilst there were still some old papers remaining in the presses, supposed to be duplicates, and of no consequence. This whole wing of the house they were obliged to abandon to the flames, but the fire was stopped in it's progress at last, and the principal part of the mansion was preserved by wet mortar, according to Mr. Percy's judicious order, by the prompt obedience, and by the unanimity, of all who assisted.

The next morning the family saw the

melancholy spectacle of a heap of ruins in the place of that library which they all loved so much. However, it was their disposition to make the best of misfortunes; instead of deploring what they had lost, they rejoiced in having suffered so little and saved so much. They particularly rejoiced that no lives had been lost;—Mr. Percy declared, that for his own part, he would willingly undergo much greater pecuniary loss, to have had the satisfaction of seeing in all his family so much presence of mind, and so much freedom from selfishness, as they had shown upon this occasion.

When he said something of this sort, before his servants, who were all assembled, it was observed that one of them, a very old nurse, looked immediately at Caroline, then lifted up her hands and eyes to Heaven, in silent gratitude. Upon inquiry it appeared, that in the confusion and terror, when the alarm had first been raised, the nurse had been forgotten, or it had been taken

for granted, that she had gone home to her own cottage the preceding evening.

Caroline, however, recollected her, and ran to her room, which was in the attic story over the library.

When Caroline opened the door, she could scarcely see the bed.—She made her way to it, however, got old Martha out of the room, and with great difficulty brought the bewildered, decrepit creature, safely down a small stair-case, which the flames had not then reached. ——Nothing could exceed her gratitude; with eyes streaming with tears, and a head shaking with strong emotion, she delighted in relating all these circumstances, and declared, that none but Miss Caroline could have persuaded her to go down that staircase, when she saw all below in flames.

Mr. Percy's first care was to look over his papers, to see whether any were missing.—To his consternation, one valuable deed, a deed by which he held the whole Percy estate, was no where to

be found. Mr. Percy had particular reason for being alarmed by the loss of this paper.—The heir at law to this estate had long been lying in wait to make an attack upon him.—Aware of this, Mr. Percy took all prudent means to conceal the loss of this paper, and he cautioned his whole family never to mention it.

It happened about this time, that a poor old man, to whom Buckhurst Falconer had given that puppy which his brother John had so bitterly regretted, came to Mr. Percy to complain, that "the dog had brought him into great trouble." The puppy had grown into a dog, and of this the old man had forgotten to give notice to the tax-gatherer; Mr. Percy perceiving clearly that the man had no design to defraud, and pitying him for having thus by his ignorance or carelessness subjected himself to the heavy penalty of ten pounds, which, without selling his only cow, he was unable to pay, advised him to state the

simple fact in a petition, and Mr. Percy promised to transmit this petition to government, with a memorial against the tax-gatherer, who had been accused, in many instances, of oppressive and corrupt conduct. He had hitherto defied all complainants, because he was armed strong in law by an attorney who was his near relation,—an attorney of the name of Sharpe, whose cunning and skill in the doubles and mazes of his profession, and whose active and vindictive temper had rendered him the terror of the neighborhood.—Not only the poor but the rich feared him, for he never failed to devise means of revenging himself wherever he was offended.—He, one morning, waited on Mr. Percy, to speak to him about the memorial, which "he understood Mr. Percy was drawing up against Mr. Bates, the tax-gatherer."

"Perhaps, Mr. Percy," said he, "you don't know, that Mr. Bates is my near relation."

Mr. Percy replied, "that he had not

known it; but that now he did, he could not perceive how that altered the business; as he interfered, not from any private motive, but from a sense of public justice, which made him desire to remove a person from a situation, for which he had shown himself utterly unfit."

Mr. Sharpe smiled, a malicious smile, and declared, "that for his part, he did not pretend to be a reformer of abuses; he thought in the present times, that gentlemen, who wished well to their King, and the peace of the country, ought not to be forward to lend their names to popular discontents, and should not embarrass government with petty complaints.—Gentlemen could never foresee where such things would end, and therefore, in the *existing circumstances*, they ought surely to endeavor to strengthen, instead of weakening the hands of government."

To this common place *cant*, by which all sorts of corruption, and all public delinquents might be screened, and by

which selfishness and fraud hope to pass for loyalty and love of the peace of the country, Mr. Percy did not attempt, or rather did not deign, any reply.

Mr. Sharpe then insinuated, that Lord Oldborough, who had put Bates into his present situation, would be displeased by a complaint against him. Mr. Sharpe observed, "that Lord Oldborough was remarkable for standing steadily by all the persons whom he appointed, and that, if Mr. Percy persisted in this attack, he would probably not find himself thanked by his own relations, the Falconers."

This hint produced no effect, so at last Mr. Sharpe concluded, by saying, with an air of prodigious legal assurance, that "for his own part he was quite at ease about the result of the affair, for he was confident, that, when the matter came to be properly inquired into, and the witnesses to be cross-examined, no malepractices could be brought home to his relation."

"Then," Mr. Percy observed, "that a memorial, praying to have the circumstances inquired into, could be no disadvantage to Mr. Bates, but the contrary, as it would tend to prove his innocence publicly, and to remove the prejudice which now subsisted against him." —Mr. Percy, who had the memorial at this time in his hand, deliberately folded it up, and directed it.

"Then, Sir," cried Mr. Sharpe, put off his guard by anger,—"since you are determined to throw away the scabbard, you cannot be surprised if I do the same."

Mr. Percy, smiling, said "that he feared no sword, but the sword of justice, which could not fall on his head, while he was doing what was just—" As he spoke, he prepared to seal the memorial.

Mr. Sharpe's habitual caution recurring in the space of a second or two, he begged pardon if zeal for his relation had hurried him into any unbecoming

warmth of expression, and stretching out his hand eagerly to stop Mr. Percy, as he was going to press down the seal, "Give me leave, Sir," said he, "give me leave to run my eye over that memorial, —may I beg, before you seal it."

"And welcome," said Mr. Percy, putting the paper into his hand—"All that I do shall be done openly and fairly."

The attorney took possession of the memorial, and began to con it over. As he was reading it, he happened to stand in a recessed window, so that he could not easily be seen by any person who entered the room,—at this moment Rosamond came in suddenly, exclaiming, as she held up a huge unfolded parchment,

"I've found it!—I've found it!—My dear father!—I do believe this is Sir John Percy's deed that was lost!—I always said it was not burned .... What's the matter?—What do you mean? .... Nobody can hear me; the outer door is

shut . . . . Perhaps this is only a copy. —It is not signed or sealed, but I suppose . . . ."

Here she stopped short, for she saw Mr. Sharpe——She looked so much astounded, that even if he had not heard all she had said, her countenance would have excited his curiosity. The attorney had heard every syllable she had uttered, and he knew enough of Mr. Percy's affairs, to comprehend the full extent of the advantage that might be made of this discovery. He coolly returned the memorial, acknowledging, that it was drawn up with much moderation and ability, but regretting, that Mr. Percy should think it necessary to send it, and concluding with a few general expressions of the regard he had always felt for the family, he took his leave.

"All is safe!"—cried Rosamond, as soon as she heard the house door shut after he was gone. "All is safe, thank Heaven!—for that man's head was luckily

so full of this memorial, that he never heard one word I said."

Mr. Percy was of a different opinion: he was persuaded, that the attorney would not neglect so fine an opportunity of revenge. Sharpe had formerly been employed in suits of Sir Robert Percy. Here was now the promise of a law-suit, that would at all events put a great deal of money into the pockets of the lawyers, and a considerable gratuity would be ensured to the person, who should first inform Sir Robert of the loss of the important conveyance.

Mr. Percy's opinion of the revengeful nature of Sharpe, and his perception that he was in the solicitor's power, did not, however, make any change in his resolution about the memorial.—It was sent, and Bates was turned out of his office. For some time nothing more was heard of Mr. Sharpe.—Mr. Percy, for many months afterward, was busied in rebuilding that part of his house, which had

been destroyed by the fire, and as he was naturally of a sanguine temper, little inclined to occupy himself with cabals and quarrels, the transaction concerning Bates, and even the attorney's threat of throwing away the scabbard, passed from his mind. The family pursued the happy tenor of their lives, without remembering that there was such a being as Mr. Solicitor Sharpe.

CHAPTER VI.

AT the time of the fire at Percy-Hall, a painted glass window in the passage .... we should say the gallery .... leading to the study had been destroyed. —Old Martha, whose life Caroline had saved, had a son, who possessed some talents as a painter, and who had learnt the art of painting on glass. He had been early in his life assisted by the Percy family, and desirous to offer some small testimony of his gratitude, he begged permission to paint a new window for the gallery.—He chose for his subject the fire, and the moment when Caroline was assisting his decrepit mother down the dangerous staircase.—The painting was finished and put up on Caroline's birth-day, when she had just attained her eighteenth year. This was the only cir-

cumstance worth recording, which the biographer can find noted in the family annals at this period.—In this dearth of events may we take the liberty of introducing, according to the fashion of modern biography, a few private letters. They are written by persons, of whom the reader as yet knows nothing,—Mr. Percy's second and third sons, Alfred and Erasmus. Alfred was a barrister; Erasmus a physician; they were both at this time in London, just commencing their professional career.—Their characters . . . . but let their characters speak for themselves in their letters, else neither their letters nor their characters can be worth attention.

"My dear Father,

Pray do not feel disappointed when I tell you, that I am not getting on quite so fast as I expected. I assure you, however, that I have not neglected any honorable means of bringing myself into notice.—But it is very difficult for an

honest young man to rise without puffing, or stooping to low means.

"I stood candidate for the place of physician to the ——— hospital, and made all the necessary applications to those who had votes and interest.—Sir Amyas Courtney and Dr. Frumpton, I was told, were the leading men,—one a court, the other a city physician—one always consulted in nervous complaints—the other in desperate cases—both hating and despising each other—each seizing this election as an opportunity of plaguing and mortifying his opponent, and of making the election for the hospital a mere struggle for power, and trial of popularity. —I waited first upon Sir Amyas Courtney, and was at his house ten times before I could find him at home. At last by appointment I went to breakfast with him. He received me in the most promising manner,—recollected to have danced with my mother many years ago at a ball at Lord Somebody's—professed the greatest respect for the name of Percy

—asked me various questions about my great grandfather, which I could not answer—and paid you more compliments than I can remember.—Sir Amyas is certainly the prettiest behaved physician breathing, with the sweetest assortment of small talk.—He has the happiest art of speaking a vast deal, and yet saying nothing; or seeming to come to the point, and yet never committing himself.—For the life of me, I could not get any distinct answer from him.—He would talk of every thing but of my object.—Far, far aloof, for the first twenty minutes after he had done with my great grandfather, he kept to politics. Then we were interrupted by the arrival of a Mr. Gresham, a rich merchant, who came to look at a picture which Sir Amyas shows as a true Titian.—Sir Amyas talked a great deal of amateur nonsense, and Mr. Gresham, I thought, a great deal of sense about it.—I liked Mr. Gresham, and think he liked me, but I have not time to say more of him. Sir Amyas, in the same namby-

pamby style, and with the same soft voice, and sweet smile, talked on of pictures, and battles, and carnage, and levees, and drawing-rooms, and balls, and butterflies.—He has a museum for the ladies, and he took me to look at it.—Sad was the hour, and luckless was the day.—Among his shells there was one upon which he peculiarly prided himself, and which he showed me as an unique. I was, (I assure you) prudently silent, till he pressed for my opinion, and then, I could not avoid confessing, that I suspected it to be a *made shell*—made, Caroline knows how, by the application of acids.—Sir Amyas's countenance clouded over—and before the cloud had passed away, as my ill fortune would have it, my rival candidate, Dr. Bland called, and was admitted.—His opinion was immediately asked about the shell.—He was confident, at the first glance, that it was an unique, and was ready to swear that no acid had ever come near it.—I said no more—but I had already said too much. Dr. Bland

profited by my error.—He was all obsequiousness and flattery, admiring and extolling the nick-nacks on which he knew that Sir Amyas piqued himself.—I took my leave—well aware that my election had been decided by the shell, at least as far as Sir Amyas's vote could decide.

"I now paid my visit to Dr. Frumpton.—Do you know who he is, and who he was, and how he has risen to his present height?—He was a farrier in a remote county—he began by persuading the country people in his neighborhood, that he had a specific for the bite of a mad dog.—It happened that he cured an old dowager's favorite waiting maid, who had been bitten by a cross lap dog, which her servants pronounced to be mad, that they might have an excuse for hanging it.—The fame of this cure was spread by the dowager among her numerous acquaintance in town and country. Then he took agues—and afterwards scrofula under his protection; patronised by his old dowa-

ger, and lucky in some of his desperate quackery, Dr. Frumpton's reputation rapidly increased, and from different counties fools came to consult him. His manners were bearish even to persons of quality who resorted to his den, but these brutal manners *imposed* upon many; heightened the idea of his confidence in himself, and commanded the submission of the timid.—His tone grew higher and higher, and he more and more easily bullied the credulity of man and womankind.—It seems that either extreme of soft and polished, or of rough and brutal manner, can succeed with a physician.—*Dr.* Frumpton's name, and Dr. Frumpton's wonderful cures, were in every newspaper, and in every shop window.—No man ever puffed himself better even in this puffing age.—His success was viewed with scornful, yet with jealous eyes, by the regular bred physicians, and they did all they could to keep him down,—Sir Amyas Courtney, in particular, who would never call him any thing but *that*

farrier, making what noise he could about Frumpton's practising, without a diploma.—In pure spite Frumpton took to learning—late as it was he put himself to school—with virulent zeal he read and *crammed* till—Heaven knows how!—he accomplished getting a diploma—stood all prescribed examinations, forced himself into the college of physicians, and has grinned defiance ever since at Sir Amyas.—

"Frumpton received me with open arms, and such is the magical deception of self-love, that his apparent friendliness towards me made him appear quite agreeable, and notwithstanding all I had heard and known of him, I fancied his brutality was frankness, and his presumption strength of character.—I gave him credit especially for a happy instinct for true merit, and an honorable antipathy to flattery and meanness.—The manner in which he pronounced the words, *fawning puppy!* applied to my rival young Bland, pleased me peculiarly—and I had just exalted Frumpton into a great man, and an original genius, when he fell flat to

the level, and below the level of common mortals, in my opinion.—He found that I had waited upon Sir Amyas Courtney before I had applied to him—upon which he frowned a terrible frown, and sat scowling in silence in his arm chair for some minutes, pushing and pulling his wig backwards and forwards on his forehead.

"So, Sir, I suppose you are all for the polite system of nerves along with Sir Amyas.—All for nerves, hey?—Nervous nonsense may do well enough at the court end, but won't go down at our end of the world.—Nerves won't do for an hospital physician—no—no,—I'll keep nerves out of the hospital as long as I can, by the blessing of Heaven——So you may take your nerves back to Sir Amyas—to whom you went first—First or last I'll have nothing to do with nerves, and Sir Amyas, Sir——"

"He turned his angry eyes upon me at this moment, and I believe the astonishment of my countenance convinced him of my innocence, for without my

having said one word, he added, in a softened tone,

"Then why went you to Sir Amyas first?"

"Because he was nearest to me—he lives within two streets of my lodgings."

"Lazy dog!—bad place for lodgings," Frumpton muttered, but regaining his good humor, he became more warm in my cause than ever, on hearing the history of the shell, which he told twenty times that morning to numerous people, with variations and exaggerations, such as made it so different the twentieth time from the first, that I should hardly have known it to be my own story.—So far so good.—Dr. Frumpton was my declared friend, and swore he'd carry me through thick and thin.—I did not much like the being indebted for my success to the whim of such a brutal and ignorant champion, and I felt mortified rather than pleased at being preferred, not for my own merit of any kind, but merely from hatred and malice against a rival.—However, I settled that matter with my conscience, and

satisfied myself, that it would be for the honor of medicine, and the good of mankind, as well as for my own good, that I should gain my election.—In this persuasion I accompanied my patron yesterday, being the morning before the election, through the hospital, that he might show me what he called his *summary clinics*.—Summary, indeed!—When I saw the way in which this famous physician dealt with the lives of his poor patients, I really grew sick, and could scarcely follow him.—I promised myself, that I would act very differently, when I should have the care of them—and whilst I was making myself this promise, a poor man, who had just fallen from a scaffold, was brought into the hospital.—His leg was bruised and terribly cut, but not broken.—The surgeon was called.—This surgeon was one who had practised human farriery formerly under Dr. Frumpton, and, not liking the trouble of attending to the poor man, scarcely looked at him, and said the leg must come off—the sooner the better.—The man, perceiving that I pitied him,

cast such a beseeching look at me, as made me interpose, imprudently, impertinently, perhaps,—but I could not resist it—I forget what I said, but I know the sense of it was, that I thought the poor fellow's leg could be saved.—I remember Dr. Frumpton glared upon me instantly with eyes of fury, and asked if I dared to contradict a surgeon in his own hospital.—They prepared for the operation. The surgeon whipped on his mittens—the poor man, who was almost fainting with loss of blood, cast another piteous look at me, and said, in an Irish accent, 'Long life to you! Dear!—and don't let'm—for what will I be without a leg? ..... and my wife and childer!'—— He fell back in a swoon, and I sprung between the surgeon and him, insisting, that, as he had appealed to me, he should be left to me, and promising that he should be no expense or trouble to the hospital—Frumpton stamped, and scarcely articulate with rage, bade me leave the hospital; and I made a sign to the labourers, who had brought in the poor

man, to lift him instantly and carry him out before me, and this one of them, being his countryman, immediately did, exclaiming—'Success to your Honor! and may ye never want a friend!'—Frumpton seized me by both shoulders—pushed me after them out of the hospital—and shut the door upon me——for ever.—This morning I hear that Dr. Bland, (nerves notwithstanding,) has been chosen, and that Dr. Frumpton vows inextinguishable vengeance against me.—The story has been told with as many exaggerations as that of the *shell*, all over the city, and always to my disadvantage.—

"I am afraid I have acted in some degree improperly—and certainly imprudently—but I have the satisfaction at least to tell you, that the poor man is doing well.—I have taken lodgings for him, and have called in a young surgeon, a friend of mine, who assures me, that his leg, in another fortnight, will be as useful as any leg in London.—Pray let me hear from you, my dear father, and say . . . . if you can, that you think

me right. Thank Caroline for her *cordial* letter.

Your affectionate Son,

E. Percy."

Alfred Percy to his Father.

"My dear Father,

Thank you for the books—I have been reading hard lately, for I have still, alas! leisure enough to read.—I cannot expect to be employed, or to have *fees* for some time to come.—I am armed with patience—I am told that I have got through the worst part of my profession, the reading of dry law. This is tiresome enough to be sure. But after I had toiled on in the dark for some time through a heap of what I thought rubbish and confusion, a little light broke in upon me. Then I discerned valuable materials, where I had fancied all had been rubbish—and order where I had imagined all was confusion.—The law is a mighty maze, indeed, but not without a plan—faulty in many points, but with

compensations for those faults in other parts, and admirable upon the whole, because open to continual revisal, and capable of perpetual improvement.

" I had no intention of making this panegyric on English law. It certainly is not flattery prepense, for I was going to blame and not to praise. I think the courting of attorneys and solicitors is the worst part of the beginning of my profession: for this I was not, and I believe I never shall be, sufficiently prepared. I give them no dinners, and they neglect me; yet I hope I pay them proper attention. To make amends, however, I have been so fortunate as to form acquaintance with some gentlemen of the bar, who possess enlarged minds, and general knowledge: their conversation is of the greatest use and pleasure to me. But many barristers here are men, who live entirely among themselves, with their heads in their green bags, and their souls narrowed to a point. Mere machines for drawing pleas and rejoinders.

"I remember Burke asserts—(and I was once, with true professional party-spirit, angry with him for the assertion) —that the study of the law has a contractile power on the mind: I am now convinced it has, from what I see, and what I feel; therefore I will do all I can to counteract this contraction by the expansive force of literature. I lose no opportunity of making acquaintance with literary men, and cultivating their society. The other day, at Hookham's Library, I met with a man of considerable talents—a Mr. Temple—he was looking for a passage in the life of the Lord Keeper Guildford, which I happened to know. This brought us into a conversation, with which we were mutually so well pleased, that we agreed to dine together, for farther information—and we soon knew all that was to be known of each other's history.

Temple is of a very good family—though the younger son of a younger brother. He was brought up by his

grandfather, with whom he was a favorite. Accustomed, from his childhood, to live with the rich and great, to see a grand establishment, to be waited upon, to have servants, horses, carriages at his command, and always to consider himself as a part of one of a family who possessed every thing they could wish for in life; he says, he almost forgot, or rather never thought of the time when he was to have nothing, and when he should be obliged to provide entirely for himself. Fortunately for him, his grandfather having early discerned that he had considerable talents, determined that he should have all the advantages of education, which he thought would prepare him to shine in parliament.—His grandfather, however, died when Temple was yet scarcely eighteen.—He had put off writing a codicil to his will, by which Temple lost the provision intended for him.—All hopes of being brought into parliament were over. His uncle, who succeeded to the estate, had

sons of his own.] There were family jealousies, and young Temple, as having been a favorite, was disliked.—Promises were made by other relations, and by former friends, and by these he was amused and misled for some time; but he found he was only wasting his life, attending upon these great relations. The unkindness and falsehood of some, and the haughty neglect of others, hurt his high spirit, and roused his strong indignation.—He, in his turn, neglected and offended, was cast off at last, or forgotten by most of the fine promisers.—At which, he says, he has had reason to rejoice, for this threw him upon his own resources, and made him exert his own mind.—He applied, in earnest, to prepare himself for the profession for which he was best fitted, and went to the bar.—Now comes the part of his history for which he, with reason, alas! blames himself. He was disgusted, not so much by the labor, as by the many disagreeable circumstances, which

necessarily occur in the beginning of a barrister's course.—He could not bear the waiting in the courts or on circuit, without business, without notice. He thought his merit would never make it's way, and was provoked by seeing two or three stupid fellows pushed on by solicitors, or helped up by judges.—He had so much knowledge, talent, and eloquence, that he must in time have made a great figure, and would, undoubtedly, have risen to the first dignities, had he persevered. But he sacrificed himself to pique and impatience. He quitted the bar, and the very summer after he had left it, the illness of a senior counsel on that circuit afforded an opportunity where Temple would have been called, and where he could fully have displayed his talents. Once distinguished, such a man would have been always distinguished.—Alas!—Alas!—He now bitterly regrets, that he abandoned his profession.—This imprudence gave his friends a fair excuse for casting him off

—but he says, their neglect grieves him not, for he had resolved never more to trust to their promises, or to stoop to apply to them for patronage. He has been these last two years in an obscure garret writing for bread. He says, however, that he is sure he is happier, even in this situation, than are some of his cousins at this instant, who are struggling in poverty to be genteel, or to keep up a family name, and he would not change places with those who are in a state of idle and opprobrious dependance.——I understand . . . (remember this is a secret between ourselves) I understand that *secretary* Cunningham Falconer has found him out, and makes *good use of his pen*, but pays him shabbily. Temple is too much of a man of honor to *peach*. So Lord Oldborough knows nothing of the matter; and Cunningham gets half his business done, and supplies all his deficiencies by means of this poor drudging genius.—Perhaps I have tired you with this history of my

new friend—but he has interested me extremely—and more, the more I have seen of him.—He has faults certainly, perhaps too high a spirit, too much sensibility; but he has such a strict integrity, so much generosity of mind, and something so engaging in his manners, that I cannot help loving, admiring, and pitying him.—That last sentiment, however, I am obliged to conceal, for he would not bear it.

"I see very little of Erasmus. He has been in the country this fortnight with some patient. I long for his return.—Thank Caroline for observing the advertisement of the sale of law books. I shall take advantage of it.—I will make the inquiries you desire about Buckhurst Falconer.

Your affectionate Son,

ALFRED PERCY."

"P. S. Yes, my dear Rosamond, I *shall* be obliged to you for the flower-roots for my landlady's daughter."

Letter from Alfred.

"My dear Father, I have made all possible inquiries about Buckhurst Falconer. He staid at Cheltenham till about a month ago with the Hautons, and I hear attended Miss Hauton every where: but I do not think there is any reason to believe the report of his paying his addresses to her. The public attention he showed her was, in my opinion, designed only to pique Caroline, whom, I'm persuaded, he thinks—(between the fits of half a dozen other fancies) the first of women,—as he always calls her. Rosamond need not waste much pity on him. He is an out-of-sight-out-of-mind man. The pleasure of the present moment is all in all with him.—He has many good points in his disposition, but Caroline had penetration enough to see, that his character would never suit hers; and I rejoice, that she gave him a decided refusal.—

"Since he came to town, he has, by

his convivial powers, his good stories, good songs, and knack of mimickry, made himself so *famous*, that he has more invitations to dinner than he can accept. He has wit and talents fit for more than being the buffoon or mocking-bird of a good dinner and a pleasant party; but he seems so well contented with this *réputation de salon*, that I am afraid his ambition will not rise to any thing higher. After leading this idle life, and enjoying this cheap-earned praise, he will never submit to the seclusion and application necessary for the attainment of the great prizes of professional excellence. I doubt whether he will even persevere so far as to be called to the bar. Though the other day when I met him in Bond-Street, he assured me, and bid me assure you, that he is getting on *famously*, and eating his terms with a prodigious appetite. He seemed heartily glad to see me, and expressed warm gratitude for your having saved his con-

science, and having prevented his father from forcing him, as he said, to be a disgrace to the church.

"Rosamond asks, what sort of girls the Miss Falconers are, and whether the Falconers have been civil to me since I settled in town?—Yes:—pretty well—The girls are mere *show* girls—like a myriad of others, sing—play—dance, dress, flirt, and *all that*.—Georgiana is *beautiful sometimes*—Arabella *ugly always*. I don't like either of them, and they don't like me, for I am not an eldest son. The mother was prodigiously pleased with me at first, because she mistook me for Godfrey, or rather she mistook me for the heir of our branch of the Percys. I hear that Mrs. Falconer has infinite address, both as a political and hymeneal *intrigante:* but I have not time to study her. All together the family, though they live in constant gayety, do not give me the idea of being happy among one another. I have no particular reason for saying this. I judge

only from the tact on this subject, which I have acquired from my own happy experience.

"Love to Rosamond—I am afraid she will think I have been too severe upon Buckhurst Falconer. I know he is a favorite, at least a protégé of hers and of Godfrey's. Bid her remember I have acknowledged that he has talents and generosity: but that which interests Rosamond in his favor inclines ill-natured me against him—his being one of Caroline's suitors. I think he has great assurance to continue, in spite of all repulse, to hope, especially as he does nothing to render himself more worthy of encouragement. Thank Caroline for her letter—and assure Rosamond, that, though I have never noticed it, I was grateful for her entertaining account of M. de Tourville's *vis.* I confess I am rather late with my acknowledgments, but the fire at Percy-Hall, and many events which rapidly succeeded, put that whole affair out of my head. More-

over, the story of Euphrosine and Count Albert was so squeezed under the seal, that I must beg notes of explanation in her next. Who the deuse is Euphrosine, and what does the letter P, for the rest of the word was torn out, stand for, and is Count Albert a hero in a novel, or a real live man?

"I saw a live man yesterday, whom I did not at all like to see—Sharpe walking with our *good* cousin, Sir Robert Percy, in close conversation. This conjunction, I fear, bodes us no good.—Pray do, pray make another search for *the deed*.

"Loves, my dear father, are wasted in a letter to you; for you never take the trouble to give them to any one, nor care for them yourself—at least so you *say*.——My frank will not hold a scrap, which I had penned, in what you call my invisible hand, for my mother, to whom I have not written one letter this term. However, she will not be angry, for she

is never angry with any one—much less with me.

Your affectionate Son,

ALFRED PERCY."

Soon after this letter had been received, and while the picture of his life and the portraits of his worthy companions were yet fresh in her view, Buckhurst Falconer took the unhappy moment to write to renew his declaration of passionate attachment to Caroline, and to beg to be permitted to wait upon her once more.

From the indignant blush, which mounted in Caroline's face on reading his letter, Rosamond saw how unlikely it was, that this request should be granted. It came, indeed, at an unlucky time.—Rosamond could not refrain from a few words of apology, and looks of commiseration for Buckhurst; yet she entirely approved of Caroline's answer to his letter, and the steady repetition

of her refusal, and even of the strengthened terms in which it was now expressed. Rosamond was always prudent for her friends, when it came to any serious point where their interests or happiness were concerned. Her affection for her friends, and her fear of doing wrong on such occasions, awakened her judgment, and so controlled her imagination, that she then proved herself uncommonly judicious and discreet.—Prudence had not, it is true, been a part of Rosamond's character in childhood; but, in the course of her education, a considerable portion of it had been infused by a very careful and skilful hand. Perhaps it had never completely assimilated with the original composition: sometimes the prudence fell to the bottom, sometimes was shaken to the top, according to the agitation or tranquillity of her mind; sometimes it was so faintly visible, that it's existence might be doubted by the hasty observer; but when put to a proper test it never

failed to appear in full force.——After any effort of discretion in conduct, Rosamond, however, often relieved and amused herself by talking in favor of the imprudent side of the question.

"You have decided prudently, my dear Caroline, I acknowledge," said she. "But now your letter is fairly gone; now that it is all over, and that we are safe, I begin to think you are a little too prudent for your age.—Bless me, Caroline, if you are so prudent at eighteen, what will you be at thirty?—Beware!—and in the mean time you will never be a heroine—what a stupid uninteresting heroine you will make! You will never get into any *entanglements*, never have any adventures; or if kind fate should, propitious to my prayer, bring you into some charming difficulties, even then we could not tremble for you, or enjoy all the luxury of pity, because we should always know, that you would be so well able to extricate yourself,—so certain to conquer, or,—not

die — but endure.——Recollect, that Doctor Johnson, when his learned sock was off, confessed that he could never be thoroughly interested for Clarissa, because he knew that her prudence would always be equal to every occasion."—

Mrs. Percy began to question, whether Johnson had ever expressed this sentiment seriously: she reprobated the cruelty of *friendly* biographers, who publish every light expression that escapes from celebrated lips in private conversation; she was going to have added a word or two about the injury done to the public, to young people especially, by the spreading such rash dogmas under the sanction of a great name.

But Rosamond did not give her mother time to enforce this moral, she went on rapidly with her own thoughts.

"Caroline, my dear," continued she, "you shall not be my heroine—you are too well proportioned for a heroine; in mind, I mean—a heroine may, *must* have a finely proportioned person, but never a

well-proportioned mind. All her virtues must be larger than the life—all her passions those of a tragedy queen.—Produce . . . only dare to produce one of your reasonable wives, mothers, daughters, or sisters on the theatre, and you would see them hissed off the stage.—Good people are acknowledged to be the bane of the drama and the novel—I never wish to see a reasonable woman on the stage, or an unreasonable woman off it.—I have the greatest sympathy and admiration for your true heroine in a book; but I grant you, that in real life, in a private room, the tragedy queen would be too much for me; and the novel heroine would be the most useless, troublesome, affected, haranguing, egoistical, insufferable being imaginable.—So, my dear Caroline, I am content, that you are my sister and my friend, though I give you up as a heroine."

CHAPTER VII.

Letter from Godfrey Percy to Mrs. Percy.

London, the British Hotel.

"YOU will be surprised, my dear mother, to find that I am in London, instead of being, as I had hoped I should have been by this time, with the army on the Continent. Just as we were going to embark, we were countermanded, and ordered to stay at our quarters. Conceive our disappointment——To remain in garrison at the most stupid, idle country town in England.—

"You ask, how I like my brother-officers, and what sort of men they are? —Major Gascoigne, son to my father's friend, I like extremely; he is a man of

a liberal spirit, much information, and zeal for the army.—But what I particularly admire in him is his candor.—He says it is his own fault that he is not higher in the army—that when he was a very young man, he was of too unbending a temper—mistook bluntness for sincerity—did not treat his superior officer with proper deference—lost a good friend by it.—

"A fine lesson for me!—and the better because not intended.—

"Next to Gascoigne, I like Captain Henry—a young man of my own age, uncommonly handsome, but quite free from conceit. There is something in his manners so gentlemanlike, and he is of so frank a disposition, that I was immediately prepossessed in his favor.—I don't like him the worse for having a tinge of proper pride, especially in the circumstances in which he is placed. I understand, that it is suspected he is not of a good family; but I am not intimate or impertinent enough to inquire into par-

ticulars. I have been told, that when he first came into the regiment, some of the officers wanted to make out what family of the Henrys he belongs to, and whether he is, or is not, one of the Irish Henrys. They showed their curiosity in an unwarrantable manner, and Henry, who has great feeling, and a spirit as quick to resent injury as to be won by kindness, was going to call one of these gentlemen to account for their impertinence. He would have had half a dozen duels upon his hands, if Gascoigne had not settled them. I have not time to tell you the whole story—but it is enough to say, that Major Gascoigne showed great address and prudence, as well as steadiness, and you would all love Captain Henry for his gratitude—he thinks Gascoigne a demigod.

"The rest of my brother officers are nothing supernatural—just what you may call mere red-coats—some of them fond of high play—others fond of drinking—so I have formed no intimacy but

with Gascoigne and Henry,—my father will see, that I do not *yet* think that the officers of my own mess must all be the first men in the universe.—

"Love to all at home—I hope we shall sail soon, and I hope Rosamond will give me credit for the length of this letter.—She cannot say, with all her malice, that my lines are at *hooting distance*, or that my words are stretched out like a lawyer's—two good pages, count which way you will!—and from Godfrey, who is not a letter-writer, as Alfred is!—Two good pages did I say? why, here's the best part of a third for you, if you allow me to be,

My dear Mother,
with much respect,
Your dutiful, obedient,
and affectionate Son,
GODFREY PERCY."

Whilst Godfrey remained in quarters at this most idle and stupid of country towns, some circumstances occurred in

the regiment, which put his prudence to trial, and, sooner than he expected, called upon him for the exercise of that spirit of forbearance and temper, which he had promised his mother he would show.—It was the more difficult to him to keep his temper, because it was an affair which touched the interest of his friend, Major Gascoigne. The Lieutenant-Colonel of the regiment having been promoted, Major Gascoigne had reasonable expectations of succeeding him, but, to his disappointment, a younger man than himself, and a stranger to the regiment, was put over his head. It was said, that this appointment was made in consequence of the new Colonel's being a nephew of Lord Skreenes, and of his also having it in his power to command two votes in parliament.

For the truth of this story we cannot pretend to vouch. But the credit the report gained in the regiment created great discontents; which the behaviour of the new Lieutenant-Colonel unfortu-

nately was not calculated to dissipate.—He certainly did not bear his honors meekly, but, on the contrary, gave himself airs of authority, and played the martinet to a useless and ridiculous degree. This, from a mere *parade officer*, who had never been out of London, to a man like the Major—who had seen service and could show wounds, was, to use the mildest expression, ill judged.—Captain Henry said it was *intolerable*—and Godfrey thought so.——

The Lieutenant-Colonel certainly did not know his own interest, for, by a little proper attention, he might readily have conciliated Major Gascoigne, who was a man of a generous and good temper. But the new sprung Colonel was more severe upon Gascoigne, with whom he was always finding fault, to show his knowledge, and always in the wrong, as Major Gascoigne very quietly and satisfactorily proved.—Every parade day something unpleasant occurred, and, when it was talked over, some of the

officers took part with Gascoigne, and some with the Lieutenant-Colonel—very few, however, with the latter, only those who wanted to *keep in* favor.—Officers in quarters, as these were, had not much to do, therefore, they had the more time for disputes, which became of more and more consequence every hour. Major Gascoigne behaved incomparably well, never failing in respect towards his superior officer when he was present, and when he was absent, doing all that was possible to restrain the imprudent zeal and indignation of his young friends.

One day, when Godfrey, Captain Henry, and Major Gascoigne, were alone together, the Major actually knelt down to Henry, to prevail upon him to give up a mad design of challenging his Colonel.

That very day, not an hour afterwards, the Lieutenant-Colonel took occasion to thwart the Major about some circumstance of no consequence.—Godfrey's blood boiled in his veins—his pro-

mise to his mother, that he would be as gentle as a lamb, he recollected at this instant—with difficulty he restrained himself—still his blood boiled.—Major Gascoigne's fear, that Godfrey and Henry should embroil themselves for his sake, increased, for he saw what passed in their hearts, and he had no peace of mind by day, or rest by night. Godfrey slept in the next room to the Major, there was only a wooden partition between the heads of their beds. In the middle of the night, Godfrey heard Major Gascoigne cry out vehemently in his sleep, and utter at different times the following broken sentences:

"Captain Percy!—Henry! if you do, I will never forgive it! You'll ruin yourself——Shoot me at once rather!"—

Then floundering about, thump went his head against the wooden partition, and this wakened him. The generous anxiety he thus sleeping and waking showed, lest his friends should get into difficulties on his account, particularly

touched Godfrey. Generous people are, of all others, the most touched by generosity, either of feeling or action.—In this state of irritation it was not possible, that things should long go on without coming to a crisis. Major Gascoigne proposed, as the measure that would be most likely to restore and preserve peace, to quit the regiment.—It was a great sacrifice on his part, and, at first, none of his friends would consent to his making it; but, at last, he brought them all to acknowledge that it was, upon the whole, the best thing that could be done. Gascoigne had a friend, a Major, in another regiment then in England, who was willing to make an exchange with him, and he thought that the business could be arranged without much difficulty. However, from caprice, the love of showing his power, or from some unknown reason, the Lieutenant-Colonel made it his pleasure to oppose the exchange, and said that it could not be done, though, as Captain Henry said,

every body knew, that by his writing a line to Lord Skreene, it would have been accomplished directly. It now recurred to Godfrey, that Cunningham Falconer, being secretary to Lord Oldborough, might be of use in this affair. Cunningham had always professed the greatest regard for Godfrey, and he was determined, at least, to make this trial of his sincerity.

The secretary sent a civil answer in an official style, explaining "*that his Office was not the War-Office,*" concluding by an assurance, that if "Captain Percy could point out how he could do so with propriety, nothing could give Mr. C. Falconer greater pleasure, than to have an opportunity of obliging him."

Now Captain Percy, having a sort of generous good faith about him, believed this last assurance; fancied that as he was no great writer, he had not explained himself well by letter, and, that he should make Cunningham understand him better *viva voce*. Keeping his own

counsel, and telling only Major Gascoigne and Captain Henry his object, he asked for a fortnight's leave of absence, and, with some difficulty, obtained it.—He went to London, waited on Secretary Falooner, and found him ten times more *official* in his style of conversation, than in his letters. Godfrey recollected, that his cousin Cunningham had always been solemnly inclined, but he now found him grown so mysterious, that he could scarcely obtain a plain answer to the simplest question. "The whole man, head and heart, seemed" as Godfrey said, "to be diplomatically closed." It was clear, from the little that Cunningham did articulate, that he would do nothing in furthering the exchange desired for Major Gascoigne; but, whether this arose from his having no influence with Lord Oldborough, or from his fear of wearing it out, our young officer could not determine. He left the Secretary in disgust and despair, and went to wait on Commissioner Fal-

coner, who gave him a polite invitation to dinner, and overwhelmed him with professions of friendship; but, as soon as Godfrey explained his business, the Commissioner protested that he could not venture to speak to Lord Oldborough on such an affair, and he earnestly advised him not to interest himself so much for Major Gascoigne, who, though doubtless a very deserving officer, was, in fact, nothing more: "What selfish cowards all these courtier people are!"—said Godfrey to himself.—He next had recourse to Buckhurst Falconer, and asked him to persuade Colonel Hauton to speak to his uncle upon the subject. This Buckhurst immediately promised to do, and kept his promise. But Colonel Hauton swore that his uncle never, on any occasion, listened to his representations, therefore, it was quite useless to speak to him.——After wandering from office to office, wasting hour after hour, and day after day, waiting for people who did him no good, when he

did see them, Godfrey at last determined to do what he should have done at first —apply to Lord Oldborough. It is always better to deal with principals than with secondaries.—Lord Oldborough had the reputation of being inaccessible, haughty, and peremptory in the extreme; the secretaries, clerks, and under-clerks, trembled at his name, each under each, through all their ranks of venality. But to Captain Percy's surprise, the moment his name was announced, the minister immediately recognised him, and received him most graciously. His Lordship inquired after his old friend Mr. Percy—said that Mr. Percy was one of the few really independent men he had ever known.—

"Mr. Percy is an excellent country gentleman, and, for England's sake, I wish there were many, many more such. —Now, Sir, how can I serve his son?"—

With frankness and brevity which suited the minister and the man, Godfrey told his business, and Lord Oldbo-

rough, with laconic decision, equally pleasing to the young soldier, replied, "that if it was possible, the thing should be done for Major Gascoigne,"——inquired how long Captain Percy purposed to stay in town—desired to see him the day before he should leave London, and named the hour.

All the diplomacy of Cunningham Falconer's face could not disguise his astonishment, when he saw the manner in which his master treated Godfrey.—The next day the Commissioner invited Captain Percy in a pressing manner to dine with him: "We shall have a very pleasant party," said Mr. Falconer, "and Mrs. Falconer insists upon the pleasure of your company—you have never seen my girls since they were children—your own near relations!—you must be better acquainted—Come—I will take no denial."—

Godfrey willingly accepted the invitation: he would, *perhaps*, have found means to have excused himself, had he

known whom he was to meet at this dinner——Miss Hauton——the dangerous fair one, whom he had resolved to avoid. But he was in the room with her, and beyond all power of receding, before he knew his peril. The young lady looked more beautiful than ever, and more melancholy. One of the Miss Falooners took an opportunity of telling him, in confidence, the cause of her poor friend's dejection. "Her uncle, Lord Oldborough, wants to marry her to the Marquis of Twickenham, the eldest son of the Duke of Greenwich, and Miss Hauton can't endure him."

The Marquis was also at this dinner—Godfrey did not much wonder at the lady's dislike—for he was a mean, peevish-looking man, had no conversation, and appeared to be fond of drinking.

"But Lord Oldborough, who is all for ambition," whispered Miss Falconer, "and who maintains that there is no such thing as love, except in novels, says, that his niece may read foolish novels after

marriage as well as before, if she pleases, but that she must marry like a reasonable woman."

Godfrey pitied her——and whilst he was pitying, Mrs. Falconer arranged a party for the Opera for this night, in which Godfrey found himself included.—Perhaps he was imprudent—but he was a young man, and human nature is ..... human nature——

At the Opera Godfrey felt his danger increase every moment. Miss Hauton was particularly engaging, and many circumstances conspired to flatter his vanity, and to interest him for this fair victim of ambition. Her Marquis was in the box, smelling of claret, and paying his *devoirs* to his intended bride, apparently very little to her satisfaction. Commissioner Falconer, leaning from the back row, complimented Miss Hauton upon her appearance this night, and observed, "that though it was a new opera, all fashionable eyes were turned from the stage to Lady Oldborough's box."

Miss Hauton smiled civilly upon the Commissioner, then turning to Godfrey, in a low soft voice repeated,

"And ev'n when fashion's brightest arts decoy,
The heart distrusting asks, if this be joy."

Godfrey was touched, she saw it,—and sighed——A short time afterwards her Marquis left the box.—Miss Hauton recovered from her languor, and became animated in conversation with Godfrey.—He felt the whole power of her charms, the immediate force of the temptation.—But he recollected who she was, he recollected, that she had not shown any instances of discretion which could redeem her from the consequences of a mother's disgrace—The songs he had heard from Miss Hauton's lips—Captain Bellamy and the *waltzing* came full upon his mind.

"No"—said he to himself—"as a wife I cannot think of her—were the Marquis of Twickenham out of the question, my wife she cannot be.—Then honor forbids me to trifle with her affections merely to gra-

tify my vanity, or the feelings of the moment."

Captain Percy well knew, that some men can satisfy their consciences, by calling a certain sort of treachery by the soft name of gallantry. He was aware, that he could, like many others in similar circumstances, deceive by equivocal looks and expressions, and then throw the blame from themselves, by asking why the woman was such a fool as to believe, protesting that they never had a thought of her, and swearing that they had not the least idea she had ever understood them to mean any thing serious; but Godfrey had too much good feeling, and good principle, to follow such examples.

Miss Hauton had a copy of the new opera before her, and as she turned over the leaves, she pointed out to him the passages that she liked. Some were peculiarly applicable to her own situation, representing a heroine forced to marry a man she hates, whilst she tenderly loves another. Godfrey could not, or would not,

understand the Italian.—It was perfectly well explained to him, and then perceiving the applications made of certain lines by Miss Hauton's voice and eyes, he had no resource but in a new singer to whom he became suddenly so attentive, that nothing could distract him from the stage. When the actress ceased to sing, he found means to engage the Miss Falconers in a discussion of her merits, which, with all the nonsense, and compliments to their taste, the occasion required, filled up the dangerous interval till the opera was over——Then——more dangerous still . . . . . waiting for carriages in *the crush room;* but through all these perils, Godfrey passed so dexterously, as to leave Miss Hauton in doubt whether she had been understood or not. Thus he hoped that her conscience would in future, if she should ever after her marriage reflect on the opera of this night, be as much at ease as his own—though, perhaps, not with so good reason.—

After this night, Godfrey would not expose himself to a repetition of similar danger, and that he might avoid meeting this fair lady again, he refused two invitations from Mrs. Falconer to a ball at her house, and to a musical party.—This deserves to be recorded to his credit, because he was very fond both of music and dancing.

The day before he was to leave town, at the hour and minute appointed, Godfrey waited upon Lord Oldborough—But not such his reception now as it had been on his first visit to this minister. He was kept two hours waiting alone in an anti-chamber. At last the cabinet door opened, and Lord Oldborough appeared with a dark cold countenance, and a haughty stiffness in his whole frame. His Lordship walked deliberately forward, till he came within a yard of our young officer, and then, without speaking, bent his head and body slowly, and so remained as if waiting to be informed who Captain Percy was, and what his business might

be. Astonishment, and offended pride, flashed successively in Godfrey's countenance.—Lord Oldborough, after fixing his interrogating eyes upon him ineffectually, receiving no explanation, seemed to come a little to his recollection, and condescended to say,

"Captain Percy, I believe!——your commands with me, Captain Percy."

"My Lord, I have the honor to be here by your Lordship's appointment on Major Gascoigne's business."

"Sir, you had a note from me yesterday, I believe, which contained all that I have it in my power to say on Major Gascoigne's business."

"Pardon me, my Lord,—I never had the honor of receiving any note from your Lordship."

"Very extraordinary! I sent it by my own man. You are at Batt's Hotel, Sir?"

"No, my Lord, at the British Hotel."

"Ha!—that is the cause of the mis-

take. You will find my note, Sir, at Batt's."—

Captain Percy bowed,—Lord Oldborough bowed,—not a word more passed,—Lord Oldborough walked on to his carriage, which rolled him away with glorious rapidity, whilst Godfrey, his face flushed with resentment, looked after him for an instant, then putting on his hat, which the porter held to him, he walked off as fast as possible to Batt's Hotel, impatient to see the note, which was to explain the meaning of this extraordinary conduct. The note he found.—But it threw little light upon the business. It was written in Secretary Cunningham Falconer's hand, and was as follows:

"Lord Oldborough will inform Captain Percy when any thing shall be decided upon relative to the business on which Captain Percy spoke to Lord Oldborough: and as communication by letter will answer every purpose, his Lord-

ship hopes, that he shall not be the means of detaining Captain Percy longer from his regiment.

Tuesday ——"

A civil dismission!—After three attempts Godfrey obtained a sight of Secretary Cunningham, who as he thought was at the bottom of the affair; but this suspicion was at first dissipated by the unusual openness with which the secretary looked and spoke. Apparently without fear of committing himself, he said at once that—"It was a very extraordinary proceeding—that he could no way account for it, but by supposing that the Lieutenant-Colonel in question had, through his relation, Lord Skreene, influenced his Grace of Greenwich, and that Lord Oldborough could not in the present conjuncture make any movement in direct opposition to the Duke."—

"In all these things, in all transactions with politicians," said Godfrey, "there are wheels within wheels, which we sim-

ple people never suspect: And by awkwardly interfering with them, when they are in motion, we are hurt, we know not how or why."—

Cunningham smiled significantly, but was silent——his air of frankness vanished, and his solemn reserve returned—"Cunningham will never be hurt in that way"—thought Godfrey—"I never saw a fellow so careful of himself. I am convinced he would not hazard his little finger to save the whole British empire, much less to serve a private friend like me, or a poor honest man like Gascoigne."

Godfrey was too proud to make any farther attempts to interest his diplomatic cousin in the affair. He rose and bade the Secretary adieu, who, with proper smiles and bows, attended him to the very door.

"Thank Heaven!"—thought Godfrey, as he left the Secretary's office—"I am not forced to dance attendance upon any great man, or any great man's secretary.

I am . . . . like my father—independent, and will keep myself so; and if ever I live upon a smile for years, it shall not be upon the smiles of a minister, but on those of a fair lady."

Godfrey left town immediately, and returned to his regiment.———

CHAPTER VIII.

LITTLE versed in the ways of courts or courtiers, Godfrey had been easily deceived by the apparent candor of Cunningham Falconer. The fact was, that Cunningham, not directly from himself, but by means of persons, of whom Lord Oldborough could have no suspicion, had insinuated to his Lordship, that Godfrey Percy was the secret cause of the aversion Miss Hauton showed to the proposed match with the Marquis of Twickenham. This idea once suggested was easily confirmed by the account of the young lady's behaviour at the opera, which was reported to Lord Oldborough with proper exaggerations, and with a total misrepresentation of Godfrey's conduct.—The fainting at the ball was also recollected, and many other little

circumstances combined to bring conviction to Lord Oldborough's mind. He was now persuaded, that Major Gascoigne's business was merely a pretence for Godfrey's coming to town; apprehension of being disappointed in completing an alliance essential to his ambitious views, pique at the idea of being deceived, and nearly duped by a boy and a girl, a rooted hatred and utter contempt for love, and love affairs altogether, produced that change in Lord Oldborough's manner towards Captain Percy, which had appeared so extraordinary.—Had Captain Percy delayed to leave town, he would next day have received orders from his commanding officer to join his regiment. As to Major Gascoigne's business, it had made so little impression upon Lord Oldborough, that he had totally forgotten the poor Major's name, till Godfrey repeated it to him. Indeed, Godfrey himself could scarcely have blamed his Lordship for this, had he known how much business,

how many cares pressed at this time upon the mind of the unhappy statesman.—Besides a load of public business, and all the open and violent attacks of opposition, which he had usually to sustain, he was now under great and increasing anxiety from the discovery of that plot against him, among his immediate associates in office, which the Tourville papers, deciphered by Commissioner Falconer and Cunningham, had but partially revealed. Lord Oldborough was in the condition of a person apprised that he is standing upon ground that is undermined, but who does not know exactly by what hand, or at what moment the train that may destroy him is to be set on fire. One word frequently recurred in the Tourville papers, which puzzled Commissioner Falconer extremely, and of which he was never able to make out the meaning; the word was Gassoc.——It was used thus:

"We are sorry to find that the Gassoc

has not agreed to our proposal."—" No answer has been given to question No. 2 by the Gassoc."——" With regard to the subsidy, of which £35,000. have not been sent or received, the Gassoc has never explained, in consequence great discontents here."—" If the Gassoc be finally determined against the *Eagle*, means must be taken to accomplish the purposes alluded to, in paragraph 4 in green (of the 7th ult.), also those in No. B in lemon-juice (of September last)."——" The Gassoc will take notes of the mining tools forgotten—also bullets too large, and no flints—(as per No. 9, in sympathetic ink)—also the sea-charts, sent instead of maps—consequent delay in march of troops—loss of fortress—to be attributed to *the Eagle*."

The Eagle, which at first had been taken for granted to be the Austrian eagle, was discovered to be Lord Oldborough. An eagle was his Lordship's crest, and the sea-charts, and the mining

tools, brought the sense home to him conclusively.—It was plain that the Gassoc stood for some person, who was inimical to Lord Oldborough, but who it could be was the question. Commissioner Falconer suggested that for *Gassoc*, you should read *Gosshawk*, then said he, "by finding what nobleman or gentleman has a goss-hawk in his arms, you have the family name, and the individual is afterwards easily ascertained." To the herald's office the Commissioner went a goss-hawking, but after spending a whole day with the assistance of Garter king at arms, he could make nothing of his goss-hawks, and he gave them up.

He next presumed, that there might be a mistake of one letter in the foreign spelling of the word, and that *Gassoc* should be *Cassock*, and might then mean a certain bishop, who was known to be a particular enemy of Lord Oldborough. But still there were things ascribed to the Gassoc, which could not come within the jurisdiction or cognizance of the Cas-

sock—and the Commissioner was reluctantly obliged to give up the church. He next suggested, that not only one letter, but every letter in the word might be mistaken in the foreign spelling, and that *Gassoc* might be the French or German written imitation of the oral sound of some English proper name. The Commissioner supported this opinion very plausibly by citing many instances of the barbarous spelling of English names by foreigners.——Bassompierre writes Jorchaux—for York-house, Innimthort for Kensington.—Even in the polite memoirs of le Comte de Grammont we have Soutkask for Southesk—and Warméstre for some English name not yet deciphered. Upon this hint the Commissioner and Cunningham made anagrams of half the noble names in England, but in vain.—

Afterwards, recollecting that it was the fashion in Charles the Second's time even to pun in the coats of arms of the nobility, and in the choice of their

mottoes, he went to work again at the Herald's office, and tried a course of puns, but to no purpose—The Commissioner was mortified to find all his ingenuity at fault.

Cunningham took care not to suggest any thing, therefore he could never be convicted of mistake. Nor was he in the least vexed by his father's, or his own fruitless labor, because he thought it might tend to his future advancement.

Lord Oldborough had thrown out a hint, that it would soon be necessary to recal the present, and send a new envoy or resident to the German court in question; Cunningham nourished a hope of being chosen for this purpose, as the Tourville papers were already known to him, and he could, under private instructions, negotiate with M. de Tourville, and draw from him an explanation. He did not, however, trust even his father with the hope he had conceived, but relied on his own address, and continually strove, by oblique hints, to magnify the

danger of leaving any part of the plot unravelled.

What effect these suggestions produced, or whether they produced any, Cunningham was unable to judge from the minister's impenetrable countenance. —Lord Oldborough lost not a moment in repairing the mistake about sea-charts, and the omission of mining-tools, which he had discovered from a paragraph in the Louville papers; he stayed not to inquire whether the error had been wilful or unintentional—*that* he left for future investigation. His next object was the subsidy. This day the Duke of Greenwich gave a cabinet-dinner. After dinner, when the servants had retired, and when none of the company were prepared for such a stroke, Lord Oldborough, in his decided, but very calm manner, began with,

"My Lords, I must call your attention to an affair of some importance.—The subsidy from the secret service to our German ally."

All who had within them sins unwhipped of justice trembled.—

"I have learned, no matter how,"—continued Lord Oldborough, "that by some strange mistake £35,000 of that subsidy were not remitted at the time appointed by us, and that discontents, likely to be prejudicial to his Majesty's service, have arisen in consequence of this delay."

His Lordship paused, and appeared to take no notice of the faces of feigned astonishment, and real consciousness by which he was surrounded. Each looked at the other to inquire by what means this secret was divulged, and to discover if possible how much more was known. Lord Skreene began at the same moment with the Duke of Greenwich, to suggest that some clerk or agent must certainly be much to blame. Lord Oldborough, in his decided tone, replied, "That it was indifferent to him, what clerk, agent, or principal, was to blame in the business; but that if the money were not *bona fide*

remitted, and acknowledged by the court to which it was promised, and before any disagreeable consequences should ensue, he must be under the necessity of stating the affair to his Majesty—of resigning his office, and bringing the whole before parliament."

The terror of his voice, and lightning of his eye, the dread of his determined spirit, operated powerfully. The subsidy was remitted the next day, though at the expense of a service of plate, which Lord Skreene had bespoken for his mistress, and though Secretary Cope was compelled to sell at some disadvantage a few of the very few remaining acres of his paternal estate, to make good what had been borrowed from the secret service money.—

At the cabinet dinner, the keen eye of Lord Oldborough had discerned some displeasure lurking in the mind of the Duke of Greenwich—a man of considerable political consequence, from his rank and connexions, and from the num-

ber of voices he could command or influence. Lord Oldborough knew, that, if he could regain the Duke, he could keep in awe his other enemies. His Grace was a puzzle-headed, pompous fool, whom Heaven had cursed with the desire to be a statesman. He had not more than four ideas, but to those four, which he conceived to be his own, he was exclusively attached.—Yet a person of address and cunning could put things into his head, which after a time he would find there, believe to be his own, and which he would then propose as new with great solemnity, and support with much zeal. Lord Oldborough, however, was neither able nor willing to manage his Grace in this manner; he was too imperious; his pride of character was at continual variance with the Duke's pride of rank. The Duke's was a sort of pride, which Lord Oldborough did not always understand, and which, when he did, he despised;—it was a species of pride, that was perpetually taking offence at trifling

failures in etiquette, of which Lord Oldborough, intent upon great objects, was sometimes guilty. There is a class of politicians, who err by looking for causes in too high a sphere, and by attributing the changes which perplex states and monarchs to great passions and large motives. Lord Oldborough was one of this class, and with all his talents would have failed in every attempt, to comprehend and conciliate the Duke of Greenwich, had he not been assisted by the inferior genius of Commissioner Falconer. While his Lordship was thus searching far and wide among the reasonable and probable causes for the Duke's coldness, examining and re-examining the bearings of every political measure, as it could affect his Grace's interest immediately or remotely, Commissioner Falconer sought for the cause, and found it in the lowest scale of trifles.—He made the discovery by means which Lord Oldborough could not have devised, and would not have used. The Duke had a favorite under-

clerk, who, for valuable consideration, disclosed the secret to the Commissioner. Lord Oldborough had sent his Grace a note, written in his own hand, sealed with a wafer.—The clerk, who was present when the note was received, said, that the Duke's face flushed violently, and that he flung the note immediately to his secretary, exclaiming,

"Open that, if you please, Sir—*I wonder how any man can have the impertinence to send me his spittle!*"

This nice offence, which bore so severe a comment, had alienated the mind of the Duke of Greenwich. When Commissioner Falconer had thus sagaciously discovered the cause of the noble Duke's displeasure, he with great address applied a remedy. Without ever hinting that he knew of the offensive circumstance, having some business to transact with the Duke, he contrived, as if undesignedly, to turn the conversation upon his friend Lord Oldborough's strange and unaccountable negligence of common forms

and etiquette; as a proof of which he told the Duke in confidence, and in a very low voice, an anecdote, which he heard from his son Cunningham, from Lord Oldborough's own secretary, or, the Commissioner protested that he would not, he could not have believed it—His Lordship had been once actually upon the point of sealing a note with a wafer to one of the Royal Dukes!—had the wafer absolutely on his lips, when Cunningham felt it his duty to take the liberty of remonstrating.—Upon which, Lord Oldborough, as Commissioner Falconer said, looked with the utmost surprise, and replied, "I have sealed with a wafer to the Duke of Greenwich, and *he* was not offended."

This anecdote, the truth of which it fortunately never occurred to the Duke to doubt, had an immediate and powerful effect upon his mind, as the Commissioner saw by the complacent smile that played on his countenance, and still further, by the condescending pity with

which his Grace observed, that "Great geniuses never understand common things —but do every thing awkwardly, whether they cut a book, or seal a note."

Mr. Falconer having thus brought the Duke into fine temper, left him in the best dispositions possible toward Lord Oldborough, went to his Lordship to report progress, and to boast of his success; but he told only as much of what had passed, as he thought would suit the statesman's character, and ensure his approbation.—The Duke of Greenwich was as much pleased by this reconciliation as Lord Oldborough; for, though in a fit of offended pride he had been so rash as to join his Lordship's enemies, yet he had always dreaded coming to open war with such an adversary. His Grace felt infinitely more safe and comfortable when he was leaning upon Lord Oldborough, than when he stood opposed to him, even in secret. There were points in politics in which he and Lord Oldborough coincided, though they had

arrived at these by far different roads. They agreed in an overweening love of aristocracy, and in an inclination toward arbitrary power; they agreed in a hatred of innovation; they agreed in the principle, that free discussion should be discouraged, and that the country should be governed with a high and strong hand. On these principles Lord Oldborough always acted, but seldom spoke, and the Duke of Greenwich continually talked, but seldom acted. In fact, his Grace, "though he roared so loud, and looked so wondrous grim," was, in action, afraid of every shadow. Right glad was he to have his political vaunts made good by a coadjutor of commanding talents, resource, and civil courage. Yet, as Lord Oldborough observed, with a man of such wayward pride and weak understanding, there was no security from day to day for the permanence of his attachment. It was then that Commissioner Falconer, ever ready at expedients, suggested that an alliance be-

tween his Grace's family and his Lordship's would be the best possible security; and that this alliance might be easily effected, since it was evident, of late, that the Marquis of Twickenham was much disposed to admire the charms of his Lordship's niece, Miss Hauton. Lord Oldborough had not remarked, that the Marquis admired any thing but good wine; his Lordship's attention was not turned to these things, nor had he, in general, much faith in friendships founded on family alliances; but he observed, that the Duke was peculiarly tenacious of connexions and relationships, and, therefore, this might be the best method of holding him.—

From the moment Lord Oldborough decided in favor of this scheme, Mr. and Mrs. Falconer had done all in their power, with the utmost zeal and address, to forward it, by contriving continual dancing parties and musical meetings, at their house, for the young people. Lady Oldborough, who was sickly, whose

manners were not popular, and who could not bear *to be put out of her way*, was quite unsuited to this sort of business, and rejoiced that the Falconers took it off her hands. Things were just in this state, and Lord Oldborough had fixed his mind upon the match, when Godfrey Percy's arrival in town had threatened disappointment. In consequence of this fear, Lord Oldborough not only despatched Godfrey directly to his regiment, but, to put an end to the danger at once, to banish the idea of seeing him again completely out of the young lady's head, the cruel uncle and decided politician had Godfrey's regiment ordered immediately to the West Indies.

Letter from Godfrey Percy to his Father.

"My dear Father,

We have a new Lieutenant-Colonel.—Lord Skreene has removed his precious nephew to another regiment, and to punish us for not liking

the pretty boy, has ordered us all off to the West Indies.—So ends our croaking,—our new King Log we cannot complain of as too young, or too much on the *qui-vive*—he looks as if he was far gone in a lethargy—can hardly keep himself awake while he is giving the word of command, and, instead of being a martinette, I am sure he would not care if the whole corps wore their regimentals the wrong side outwards.—Gascoigne will have all the regimental business on his shoulders, and no man can do it better.—He is now at my elbow, supplying four hundred men and forty officers with heads.—The noise of questions and commands, and the notes of preparation, are so loud and dissonant, that I hardly know what I write. Gascoigne, though not benefited, was obliged to me for my wronghead-journey to London——Henry was very angry with Lord Oldborough for jilting me——Gascoigne with much ado kept him in proper manners toward the Lieutenant-Colonel, and

I, in admiration of Gascoigne, kept my temper miraculously. But there was an impertinent puppy of an Ensign, a partisan of the Lieutenant-Colonel's, who wanted, I'm convinced, to have the credit of fighting a duel for the Colonel, and he one day said, in Captain Henry's hearing, that "it was no wonder some men should rail against ministerial *influence*, who had no friends to look to, and were men of no family."—"Do you mean that for me, Sir?"—said Henry. "Judge for yourself, Sir."—Poor Henry judged ill, and challenged the Ensign.—They fought—and the Ensign was slightly wounded. In consequence of this duel, curiosity has been wakened again about Henry's birth, and he is in danger of being exposed continually to things he could not like, and could not well resent. He consulted Gascoigne and me, and has told us all he knows of his history.—Read what follows to yourself, for I have permission to speak of his affairs only to you. Captain Henry assured

us, that he really does not know to what family he belongs, nor who his father and mother were; but he has reason to believe, that they were Irish. He was bred up in a merchant's house in Dublin. The merchant broke, and went off with his family to America. Henry was at that time fifteen or sixteen. The merchant then said, that Henry was not his nephew, nor any relation to him, but hinted that he was the son of a Mr. Henry, who had taken an unfortunate part in *the troubles* of Ireland, and who had *suffered*,—that his mother had been a servant-maid, and that she was dead. The merchant added, that he had taken care of Henry from regard to his father, but that, obliged by his own failure in business to quit the country, he must thenceforward resign the charge.—He farther observed, that the army was now the young man's only resource, and, on taking leave, he put into Henry's hands a £50 note, and an Ensign's commission. —With this commission he joined his regi-

ment, which was at Cork. A few days after his arrival, a Cork banker called upon him, and inquired whether he was Ensign Charles Henry; and upon his answering in the affirmative, informed him, that he had orders to pay him £400 in quarterly payments. The order came from a house in Dublin, and this was all the banker knew. On Henry's application in Dublin, he was told, that they had direction to stop payment of the annuity, if any questions were asked.—Of course, Henry asked no more.—The annuity has been regularly paid to him ever since. ——When he was scarcely seventeen he was pillaged of a couple of hundred pounds one night by a set of sharpers at the gaming table.—This loss roused his prudence, and he has never played since. He has for many years lived within his pay, for he prudently considered, that the extraordinary supply might suddenly fail, and then he might be left in debt and distress, and at the same time with habits of extravagance.——Instead of

which, he has laid up money every year, and has a considerable sum.—He wishes to quit the army, and to go into a mercantile house, for which his early education has fitted him. He has a particular talent for languages—speaks French and Italian accurately—Spanish and Dutch well enough for all the purposes of commerce. So any mercantile house, who wants a partner, agent, or *clerk for foreign affairs* (perhaps I am not correct in the technical terms) could not do better than to take Charles Henry. For his integrity and honor I would answer with my life. Now, my dear father, could you have the goodness to assist us so far as to write and inquire about the partner in London of those Dutch merchants, whom you had an opportunity of obliging at the time of the shipwreck? — I cannot recollect their strange names, but if I am not mistaken, they left you their address, and that of their London correspondent.——If this partner should be a substantial man,

perhaps our best plan would be to try to get Henry into his house.—You have certainly some claim there, and the Dutchmen desired we would apply to them, if ever they could do any thing to serve us—We can but try—I am afraid you will say, "*This is like one of Godfrey's wild schemes.*"—I am still more afraid, that you should think Henry's romantic story is *against him*—but such things are—that is all I can say—Here is no motive for deception; and if you were to see the young man, his countenance and manner would immediately persuade you of his perfect truth and ingenuousness—I am aware that his romantic history would not do for the Dutch merchants, or the London partner; they would probably set him down directly for an adventurer, and refuse to have any thing to do with him.—So I see no necessity for beginning by stating it. I know you hate, and I am sure so do I, all novel like concealments and mysteries: but, because a man makes a

bargain with another, he is not obliged to tell him his whole history—because he takes him for his partner or his master, he is not called upon to make him his confidant.—All that the merchants can want or have a right to know, is forthcoming and clear as the noon-day—character—and money.

"My affectionate love and old-fashioned duty to my dear mother—pray assure her and my sisters, that they shall hear from me, though I am going to have "one foot on sea and one on land."—

"Tell dear Caroline the portfolio she made for me shall go with me to the world's end; and Rosamond's *Tippoo Saib* shall see the *West* Indies—Gascoigne has been in the West Indies before now, and he says and proves, that temperance and spice are the best preservatives in that climate; so you need not fear for me, for you know I love pepper better than port.—I am called away, and can only add, that the yellow fever there has subsided, as an officer

who arrived last week tells me.—Our regiment is just going to embark in high spirits—God bless you all.

Your affectionate Son,

G. Percy."

"P. S. Don't let my mother or Rosamond trust to newspaper reports—Trust to nothing but my letters—Caroline, I know, is fit to be the sister, and I hope will some time be the mother of heroes."

CHAPTER IX.

LORD OLDBOROUGH expected, that the prompt measure of despatching the dangerous Godfrey to the West Indies would restore things to their former train. For a week after Godfrey Percy's departure Miss Hauton seemed much affected by it, and was from morning till night languid, or in the sullens. Of all which Lord Oldborough took not the slightest notice. In the course of a fortnight Miss Falconer, who became inseparable from Miss Hauton, flattering, pitying, and humoring her, contrived to recover the young lady from this fit of despondency, and produced her again at musical parties. She was passionately fond of music; the Miss Falconers played on the forte piano and sung, their brother John accompanied exquisitely

on the flute, and the Marquis of Twickenham, who was dull as "the fat weed that grows on Lethe's brink," stood by, —admiring. His proposal was made in form—and in form the young lady evaded it—in form her uncle, Lord Oldborough, told her, that the thing must be, and proceeded directly to decide upon the settlements with the Duke of Greenwich, and set the lawyers to work. In the mean time, the bride elect wept, and deplored, and refused to eat, drink, or speak, except to the Miss Falconers, with whom she was closeted for hours, and to whom the task of managing her was consigned by common consent.—The Marquis, who, though he was, as he said, much in love, was not very delicate as to the possession of the lady's affections, wondered that any one going to be married to the Marquis of Twickenham could be so shy, and so melancholy; but her confidantes assured him, that "it was all uncommon refinement and sensibility, which was their

sweetest Maria's only fault."—Excellent claret, and a moderately good opinion of himself, persuaded the Marquis of the truth of all the Miss Falconers pleased to say, and her uncle graciously granted the delays, which the young lady prayed for week after week—till, at last, striking his hand upon the table, Lord Oldborough said, "There must be an end of this—the papers must be signed this day se'nnight—Maria Hauton shall be married this day fortnight."——Maria Hauton was sent for to her uncle's study, heard her doom in sullen silence; but she made no show of resistance, and Lord Oldborough was satisfied. An hour afterwards Commissioner Falconer begged admission, and presented himself with a face of consternation—— Lord Oldborough, not easily surprised or alarmed, waited, however, with some anxiety, till he should speak.

"My Lord, I beg pardon for this intrusion. . . . I know, at this time, you are much occupied . . . . But it is abso-

lutely necessary I should communicate . . . I feel it to be my duty immediately . . . and I cannot hesitate . . . though I really do not know how to bring myself . . . ."

There was something in the apparent embarrassment and distress of Mr. Falconer, which Lord Oldborough's penetrating eye instantly discerned to be affected.—His Lordship turned a chair towards him, but said not a word.—The Commissioner sat down like a man acting despair, but looking for a moment in Lord Oldborough's face, he saw what his Lordship was thinking of, and immediately his affected embarrassment became real and great.——

"Well, Commissioner, what is the difficulty?"

"My Lord, I have within this quarter of an hour heard what will ruin me for ever in your Lordship's opinion, unless your Lordship does me the justice to believe, that I never heard or suspect-

ed it before—I have only to trust to your magnanimity—and, I do."

Lord Oldborough bowed slightly—— "The fact, if you please, my dear Sir?"

"The fact, my Lord, is, that Captain Bellamy, whose eyes, I suppose, have been quickened by jealousy, has discovered what has escaped us all .... what never would have occurred to me .... what never could have entered into my mind to suspect .... what I still hope ...."

"The fact, Sir, let me beg"—

The urgency of Lord Oldborough's look and voice admitted of no delay.

"Miss Hauton is in love with my son John."

"Indeed!"———

This—"Indeed!"——was pronounced in a tone which left the Commissioner in doubt what it expressed, whether pure surprise—indignation, or contempt—most of the last, perhaps—he longed

to hear it repeated, but he had not that satisfaction.—Lord Oldborough turned abruptly—walked up and down the room with such a firm tread as sounded ominously to the Commissioner's ear.—

"So then, Sir, Miss Hauton, I think you tell me, is in love with Cornet Falconer?"

"Captain Bellamy says so, my Lord"—

"Sir, I care not what Captain Bellamy says—nor do I well know who, or what he is—much less, what he can have to do with my family affairs—I ask, Sir, what reason you have to believe, that my niece is in love, as it is called, with your son? You certainly would not make such a report to me without good reason for believing it—What are your reasons?"

"Excuse me, my Lord, my reasons are founded on information which I do not think myself at liberty to repeat—But upon hearing the report from"....

The Commissioner in the hurry and confusion of his mind, and in his new situation, totally lost his *tact*, and at this moment was upon the point of again saying . . . *from Captain Bellamy* . . . but the flash of Lord Oldborough's eye warned him of his danger—he dropped the name.

"I immediately went to sound my son John, and as far as I can judge, he has not yet any suspicion of the—truth."

Lord Oldborough's countenance cleared. The Commissioner recovered his presence of mind, for he thought he saw his way before him—"I thought it my duty to let your Lordship know the first hint I had of such a nature . . . for how soon it might be surmised . . . or what steps might be taken, I must leave it to your Lordship to judge—I can only assure you, that as yet, to the best of my belief, John has not any suspicion . . . Fortunately he is very slow—and not very bright."

Lord Oldborough stood with compressed lips, seeming to listen, but deep in thought.

"Mr. Commissioner Falconer, let us understand one another well now—as we have done hitherto.—If your son, Cornet Falconer, were to marry Maria Hauton, she would no longer be my niece, he would have a portionless, friendless, and, in my opinion, a very silly wife.—He is, I think you say, not very bright himself—He would probably remain a cornet the rest of his days—All idea of assistance being of course out of the question in that case, from me, or mine, to him, or his."——————

The awful pause which Lord Oldborough made, and his determined look, gave the Commissioner opportunity to reflect much, in a few seconds.—

"On the contrary," resumed his Lordship, "if your son John, my dear Sir, show the same desire to comply with my wishes, and to serve my in-

terests, which I have found in the rest of his family, he shall find me willing and able to advance him as well as his brother Cunningham."

"Your Lordship's wishes will, I can answer for it, be laws to him, as well as to the rest of his family."

"In one word then—Let Cornet Falconer be married elsewhere, within a fortnight, and I prophesy, that within a year he shall be a field officer—within two years a Lieutenant-Colonel."

Commissioner Falconer bowed twice—low to the field officer—lower to the Lieutenant-Colonel.—

"I have long had a match in my eye for John," said the father, "but a fortnight, my gracious Lord . . . that is so very short a time . . . . Your Lordship will consider there are delicacies in these cases . . . no young Lady . . . it is impossible . . . your Lordship must be sensible that it is really impossible, with a young Lady of any family"—

"I am aware that it is difficult, but not impossible"—replied Lord Oldborough, rising deliberately.

The Commissioner took his leave, stammering somewhat of "nothing being impossible for a friend"—courtier—he should have said.

The Commissioner set to work in earnest about the match he had in view for John.—Not one, but several fair visions flitted before the eye of his politic mind. The Miss Chattertons, any one of whom would, he knew, come readily within the terms prescribed—but then, they had neither fortune nor connexions. A relation of Lady Jane Granville's—excellent connexion, and reasonable fortune—but there all the decorum of regular approaches and time would be necessary: luckily a certain Miss Petcalf was just returned from India, with a large fortune. —The General, her father, was anxious to introduce his daughter to the fashionable world, and to marry her for connexion—fortune no object to him—deli-

cacies he would wave.—The Commissioner saw—counted—and decided—(There was a brother Petcalf too, who might do for Georgiana—but for that no hurry)—John was asked by his father if he would like to be a Major in a year, and a Lieutenant-Colonel in two years?

"To be sure he would—was he a fool?"

"Then he must be married in a fortnight."

John did not see how this conclusion followed immediately from the premises, for John was not *quite* a fool—So he answered——Indeed!——an *indeed!* so unlike Lord Oldborough's, that the Commissioner, struck with the contrast, could scarcely maintain the gravity the occasion required, and he could only pronounce the words,

"General Petcalf has a daughter."—

"Ay, Miss Petcalf—Ay, he is a General, true—now I see it all—Well, I'm their man—I have no objection—but Miss Petcalf! . . . . . Is not that the In-

dian girl? . . . . . Is not there a drop of black blood? . . . . . No, no, father," cried John, drawing himself up—"I'll be d——d . . . . ."

"Hear me first, my own John," cried his father, much and justly alarmed, for this motion was the precursor of an obstinate fit, which, if John took, perish father, mother, the whole human race, he could not be moved from the settled purpose of his soul.

"Hear me, my beloved John,—for you are a man of sense," said his unblushing father—"do you think I'd have a drop of black blood for my daughter-in-law, much less let my favorite son . . . . . But there's none—it is climate—all climate—as you may see by only looking at Mrs. Governor Carneguy, how she figures every where, and Miss Petcalf is nothing near so dark as Mrs. Carneguy, surely."

"Surely"—said John.

"And her father, the General, gives her an Indian fortune to suit an Indian complexion."

"That's good, at any rate," quoth John. . . . . .

"Yes, my dear Major—yes, my Lieutenant-Colonel, to be sure that's good.—So to secure the good the Gods provide us, go you this minute, dress and away to your fair Indian ..... I'll undertake the business with the General."—

"But a fortnight, my dear father," said John, looking in the glass—"how can that be?"

"Look again, and tell me how it can *not* be?—Pray don't put that difficulty into Miss Petcalf's head—into her heart I am sure it would never come."

John yielded his shoulder to the push his father gave him towards the door, but suddenly turning back,—

"Zounds, father, a fortnight," he exclaimed, "why there won't be time to buy even boots!"

"And what are even boots," replied his father, "to such a man as you?—Go, go, man, your legs are better than all the boots in the world."

Flattery can find her way to sooth the dullest, coldest ear *alive*.—John looked in the glass again—dressed—and went to flatter Miss Petcalf.—The proposal was graciously accepted, for the Commissioner stated, as he was permitted in confidence, to the General, that his son was under the special patronage of Lord Oldborough, who would make him a Lieutenant-Colonel in two years.—The General, who looked only for connexion, and genteel family, was satisfied. The young lady started at the first mention of an *early day*—but there was an absolute necessity for pressing that point, since the young officer was ordered to go abroad in a fortnight, and could not bear to leave England without completing his union with Miss Petcalf.—These reasons .... as no other were to be had, proved sufficient with father and daughter.—

John was presented with a captain's commission.—He, before the end of the fortnight, looked again and again in the glass to take leave of himself, hung up

his flute,—and—was married.—The bride and bridegroom were presented to Lord and Lady Oldborough, and went immediately abroad.

Thus the forms of homage, and the rights of vassalage are altered; the competition for favor having succeeded to the dependance for protection, the feudal lord of ancient times could ill compete in power with the influence of the modern political patron.——

Pending the negotiation of this marriage, and during the whole of this eventful fortnight, Cunningham Falconer had been in the utmost anxiety that can be conceived—not for a brother's interests, but for his own: his own advancement he judged would depend upon the result, and he could not rest day or night, till the marriage was happily completed,—though, at the same time, he secretly cursed all the loves and marriages, which had drawn Lord Oldborough's attention away from that embassy, on which his own heart was fixed.

Buckhurst, the while, though not admitted behind the scenes, said he was sufficiently amused by what he saw on the stage, enjoyed the comedy of the whole, and pretty well made out for himself the double plot.—The confidante, Miss Falconer, played her part to admiration, and prevailed on Miss Hauton to appear on the appointed day in the character of a *reasonable woman*, and accordingly she suffered herself to be led, in fashionable style, to the hymeneal altar by the Marquis of Twickenham. This dénouement satisfied Lord Oldborough.

Captain Percy to his brother Alfred.

"DEAR ALFRED,

"Don't flatter yourself that I am yet gone to Jamaica: notwithstanding the hurry of our embarkation, we were six weeks detained at Portsmouth, waiting for some order, which some secretary had forgotten to expedite.—At last we sailed, and then were driven back by contrary winds, forced to put in at Ply-

mouth, from whence I now write after sitting up and dancing all night. And who do you think I found here waltzing with the mayor's daughters, *rusticating*, as he says, and lost to the world? Who do you think?—Captain Bellamy, who used to waltz with Miss Hanton, which cured me luckily of all desire to have her for my partner for life. Bellamy tells me the strangest story of her having been, since I left London, in love and out of love with John Falconer—John Falconer—the dunce—but surely this is a fable, or a dream, or a blunder of Bellamy's—especially as in to day's paper I see the marriage of the said John to Miss Petcalf, and a paragraph in the same paper announcing, that the young Marquis of Twickenham is next week to lead to the altar the beautiful and accomplished niece of Lord Oldborough. All this has been done so suddenly, that it makes me rub my eyes, and feel like Mahomet, who plunged his head into a tub of water, and when he took it out again, heard

of four marriages that had happened during his dip.—Pray send me word by next post, what I am to believe and disbelieve, that I may not go with wrong news and a puzzled head to Jamaica.—My heart, thank Heaven, has nothing to do with the business now.—But I shall be glad, however, to know for certain, whether Miss Hauton is to be pitied or congratulated, upon becoming Marchioness of Twickenham.

"Gascoigne and I are anxious to hear how Charles Henry goes on, and how he likes being with the merchants. I take it for granted that he *is* with them. But I have not heard from him, or from any of you, because *you took it for granted*, I suppose, that I was upon the salt seas.—Pray be kind to Henry, and see as much of him as you can, and send me his address, for I cannot recollect the merchant's name.

"Remember Gascoigne to him—Gascoigne loves him as if he was his son,

and I should believe Henry was his son, only that Gascoigne is not old enough.

"The first leisure moment, will you go to De Berg's riding house, and inquire whether he has broke the horse he promised me, White-Surrey?—I intended it for Caroline, but forgot to say so in the hurry of our departure.—Do you settle with De Berg for me handsomely, and send the horse down to Caroline, with my love, hoping White-Surrey will prove both gentle and spirited.

"In an old, *old* letter of yours, which just now fell out of my letter-case, and which, for want of something better to do, I have reperused, I find a prophecy to which, at the time I first read it, I paid,—begging your pardon,—little attention; but now it strikes me with some force. You prophesy, that Attorney Sharpe, and our worthy relative, Sir Robert Percy, whom you saw conjuring together, will work us wo.—Do you really think it possible, that, work as

they will, they can ever work themselves into the Percy estate? and do you seriously advise me to prepare for being poor, and to practise being economical? ——I will think of it.———

"How are you and Erasmus getting on? Write me long letters and full accounts of yourselves—Rosamond and Caroline promise to furnish me with a home-journal regularly.—

"I purpose—but will not promise—to live upon my pay, and not to cost my father (—God bless him! for the best of fathers as he is, though I say it in a parenthesis)—one shilling—provided always, that I do not lose my baggage. But Gascoigne warns me, that every young officer loses his baggage by his own carelessness, once, at least, in his life—Gascoigne lost his three times, but he had a good mother—a good aunt—and a good brother, who never let him feel the loss, so he says, he wonders that he did not lose it a fourth time.—I have friends enough who would, I dare say,

spoil me in the same way; but, lest your prophecies should be accomplished, and that I should be the ruin of my good friends, I will go and look after my own baggage.

Your affectionate Brother,

G. PERCY."

CHAPTER X.

THE day after his niece's marriage was happily effected, Lord Oldborough said to his secretary, "Now, Mr. Cunningham Falconer, I have leisure to turn my mind again to the Tourville papers."

"I was in hopes, my Lord,"—said the Secretary *(se composant le visage)*—"I was in hopes that this happy alliance, which secures the Duke of Greenwich, would have put your Lordship's mind completely at ease, and that you would not have felt it necessary to examine farther into that mystery."

"Weak men never foresee adversity during prosperity, nor prosperity during adversity,"—replied Lord Oldborough. "His Majesty has decided immediately to recal his present envoy at that German court: a new one will be sent, and the

choice of that Envoy his Majesty is graciously pleased to leave to me.—You are a very young man, Mr. Cunningham Falconer, but you have given me such *written* irrefragable proofs of your ability and information, that I have no scruple in recommending you to his Majesty, as a person to whom his interests may be intrusted, and the zeal and attachment your family have shown me in actions, not in words only, have convinced me, that I cannot choose better for my private affairs.—Therefore, if the appointment be agreeable to you, you cannot too soon make what preparations may be necessary."

Cunningham delighted, made his acknowledgments and thanks for the honor and the favor conferred upon him, with all the eloquence in his power.

"I endeavor not to do any thing hastily, Mr. Cunningham Falconer," said his Lordship. "I frankly tell you, that I was not at first prepossessed in your favor, nor did I feel inclined to do

more for you, than that to which I had been induced by peculiar circumstances. —Under this prepossession, I, perhaps, did not for some time do justice to your talents, but I should be without judgment, or without candor, if I did not feel and acknowledge the merit of the performance which I hold in my hand."

The performance was a pamphlet in support of Lord Oldborough's administration, published in Cunningham's name, but the greater part of it was written by his good genius in the garret.

"On *this*," said Lord Oldborough, putting his hand upon it as it lay on the table, "on *this* found your just title, Sir, to my esteem and confidence."

Would not the truth have burst from any man of common generosity, honor, or honesty?—Would not a man who had any feeling, conscience, or shame, supposing he could have resolved to keep his secret, at this instant, have been ready to sink into the earth with confusion, under this unmerited praise?—

In availing himself falsely of a title to esteem and confidence, then fraudulently of another's talents to obtain favor, honor, and emolument, would not a blush, or silence, some awkwardness, or some hesitation, have betrayed him to eyes, far less penetrating than those of Lord Oldborough?—Yet nothing of this was felt by Cunningham,—he made, with a good grace, all the disqualifying speeches of a modest author, repeated his thanks and assurances of grateful attachment, and retired triumphant.—It must be acknowledged, that he was fit for a diplomatist. His credentials were forthwith made out in form, and his instructions, public and private, furnished. No expense was spared in fitting him out for his embassy—his preparations made, his suite appointed, his liveries finished, his carriage at the door, he departed in grand style; and all Commissioner Falconer's friends, of which, at this time, he could not fail to have many, poured in with congratulations on the rapid ad-

vancement of his sons, and on all sides, exclamations were heard in favor of *friends in power*.

"True—very true indeed.—And see what it is," said Commissioner Falconer, turning to Buckhurst,—"see what it is to have a son so perverse, that he will not make use of a good friend when he has one, and who will not accept the promise of an excellent living when he can get it!"—

All his friends and acquaintance now joining in one chorus, told Buckhurst in courtly terms, that he was a fool, and Buckhurst began to think they must be right.—"For here," said he to himself, "are my two precious brothers finely provided for, one an Envoy, the other a Major *in esse*, and a Lieutenant-Colonel *in posse*—and I, *in esse* and *in posse*, what?—Nothing—but a good fellow—one day with the four-in-hand club, the next in my chambers, studying the law, by which I shall never make a penny.—And there's Miss Caroline Percy, who

has declined the honor of my hand, no doubt, merely because I have indulged a little in good company, instead of immuring myself with Coke and Blackstone, Viners and Saunders, Bosanquet and Schoales, or chaining myself to a special-pleader's desk, like cousin Alfred, that galley-slave of the law!—No, no, I'll not make a galley-slave of myself.—Besides, at my mother's, in all that set, and in the higher circles with Hauton and the Clays, and those people, whenever I appear in the character of a poor barrister, I am scouted,—should never have *got on* at all, but for my being a wit——a wit!—and have not I wit enough to make my fortune? as my father says—What hinders me?——My conscience only—And why should my conscience be so cursedly delicate, so unlike other men's consciences?"—

In this humor, Buckhurst was easily persuaded by his father to take orders. The paralytic incumbent of Chipping-Friars had just at this time another

stroke of the palsy, on which Colonel Hauton congratulated the young deacon —and, to keep him in patience while waiting for the third stroke, made him chaplain to his regiment.—The Clays also introduced him to their uncle, Bishop Clay, who had, as they told him, taken a prodigious fancy to Buckhurst; for he observed that, in carving a partridge, Buckhurst never touched the wing with a knife; but, after nicking the joint, tore it off, so as to leave, adhering to the bone, that muscle obnoxious to every good eater:—the Bishop pronounced him to be—"a capital carver."—

"What a lucky dog!"—Luckier still than he, or even his politic father in his most sanguine schemes could have hoped or devised: Fortune at this time threw into Buckhurst's hands unasked, unlooked for, and in the oddest way imaginable, a gift of no small value in itself, and an earnest of her future favors.

At some high festival, Buckhurst was invited to dine with the Bishop. Now

Bishop Clay was a rubicund, full-blown, short-necked prelate, with the fear of apoplexy continually before him, except when dinner was on the table.—And at this time, a dinner was on the table, rich with every dainty of the season that earth, air, and sea, could provide. Grace being first said by the chaplain, the Bishop sat down "*richly to enjoy.*"—But it happened in the first onset, that a morsel too large for his Lordship's capacious swallow stuck in his throat.—The Bishop grew crimson,—purple,—black in the face,—the chaplain started up, and untied his neckcloth.—The guests crowded round, one offering water, another advising bread, another calling for a raw egg, another thumping his Lordship on the back.—Buckhurst Falconer ran for the bellows, and applying the muzzle directly to the prelate's ear, produced such a convulsion as expelled the pellet from the throat with a prodigious explosion, and sent it to a mighty distance. The Bishop, recovering his breath and vital

functions, sat up, restored to life, and dinner—he eat again, and drank to Mr. Buckhurst Falconer's health, with thanks for this good service to the church, to which he prophesied the reverend young gentleman would, in good time, prove an honor. And that he might be, in some measure, the means of accomplishing his own prophecy, Bishop Clay did, before he slept, which was immediately after dinner, present Mr. Buckhurst Falconer with a living worth £400 a year. A living which had not fallen into the Bishop's gift above half a day, and which, as there were six worthy clergymen in waiting for it, would necessarily have been disposed of the next morning.

"Oh! star of patronage, shine ever thus upon the Falconers!" cried Buckhurst, when, elevated with wine in honor of the church, he gave an account to his father at night of the success of the day. —"Oh! thou, whose influence has, for us, arrested Fortune at the top of her wheel, be ever thus propitious!—Only

make me a dean.—Have you not made my brother, the dunce, a colonel? and my brother, the knave, an envoy?——I only pray to be a dean—I ask not yet to be a bishop—You see I have some conscience left."

"True," said his father, laughing. "Now go to bed, Buckhurst; you may, for your fortune is up."

"Ha! my good cousin Percys, where are you now?—Education, merit, male and female, where are you now?—Planting cabbages, and presiding at a day school—one son plodding in a pleader's office—another cast in an election for an hospital physician—a third encountering a plague in the West Indies.—I give you joy."—

No wonder the Commissioner exulted, for he had not only provided thus rapidly for his sons, but he had besides happy expectations for himself.—With Lord Oldborough he was now in higher favor and confidence, than he had ever hoped to be. Lord Oldborough, who was a man

little prone to promise, and who always did more than he said, had, since the marriage of his niece, thrown out a hint, that he was aware of the expense it must have been to Commissioner and Mrs. Falconer, to give entertainments continually, and to keep open house, as they had done this winter, for his political friends—no instance of zeal in his Majesty's service, his Lordship said, he hoped was ever lost upon him, and if he continued in power, he trusted he should find occasion to show his gratitude. This from another minister might mean nothing, but to pay with words; from Lord Oldborough the Commissioner justly deemed it as good as a promissory note for a lucrative place. Accordingly he put it in circulation directly among his creditors, and he no longer trembled at the expense, at which he had lived and was living. Both Mrs. Falconer and he had ever considered a good cook, and an agreeable house, as indispensably necessary to those who

would rise in the world; and they laid it down as a maxim, that, if people wished to grow rich, they must begin by appearing so. Upon this plan every thing in their establishment, table, servants, equipage, dress, were far more splendid than their fortune could afford. The immediate gratification which resulted from this display, combining with their maxims of policy, encouraged the whole family to continue this desperate game. Whenever the timidity of the Commissioner had started; when, pressed by his creditors, he had backed, and had wished to stop in this course of extravagance; his lady, of a more intrepid character, urged him forward, pleading that "he had gone too far to recede—that the poorer they were, the more necessary to keep up the brilliant appearance of affluence. How else could her daughters, after all the sums that had been risked upon them, hope to be advantageously established? How otherwise could they preserve what her friend Lady

Jane Granville so justly styled the patronage of fashion?

When success proved Mrs. Falconer to be right—"Now! Commissioner Falconer! Now!"—how she triumphed, and how she talked! Her sons all in such favor! her daughters in such fashion!—No party without the Miss Falconers!—Miss Falconers must sing—Miss Falconers must play—Miss Falconers must dance, or no lady of a house could feel herself happy, or could think she had done her duty—No piano, no harp could draw such crowds as the Miss Falconers.—It was the ambition among the fashionable men, to dance with the Miss Falconers, to flirt with the Miss Falconers.—"Not merely flirting, ma'am;"—as Mrs. Falconer said, and took proper pains should be heard—"but several serious proposals from very respectable quarters—however, none *yet* exactly what she could resolve to accept for her girls—she looked high for them, she owned—she thought she had a right to look

high.—Girls in fashion should not take the first offers.—They should hold up their heads—why should they not aspire to rank, why not to title, as well as to fortune?"

Poor Petcalf! General Petcalf's son, had been for some time, as it was well-known, desperately in love with Miss Georgiana Falconer; but what chance had he now!—"However, he was to be *managed*," he was useful sometimes as a partner, "to whom one may say one is engaged, when a person one does not choose to dance with asks for the honor of one's hand—useful sometimes to turn over the leaves of the music-book—useful always as an attendant in public places.—Useful in short to be exhibited as a captive; for one captive leads to another conquest."—And Miss Arabella Falconer too could boast her conquests, though nobody merely by looking at her would have guessed it: but she was a striking exemplification of the truth of Lady Jane Granville's

maxim, that fashion, like Venus's girdle, can beautify any girl, let her be ever so ugly.—

And now the Falconer family having risen, and succeeded beyond their most sanguine hopes, by a combination of lucky circumstances, and by adherence to their favorite system; we leave them fortified in their principles, and at the height of prosperity.

CHAPTER XI.

FORTUNE, as if she had been piqued by Mr. Percy's disdain, and jealous of his professed reliance upon the superior power of her rival, Prudence, seemed now determined to humble him and all his family, to try if she could not force him to make some of the customary sacrifices of principle to propitiate her favor.—

Unsuspicious of the designs that were carrying forward against him in secret, Mr. Percy had quite forgotten his fears, that his wicked relation Sir Robert Percy and Solicitor Sharpe might take advantage of the loss of that deed, which had never been found since the night of the fire at Percy-Hall.—It was nearly two years afterwards, that Mr. Percy received a letter from his cousin, Sir Robert, in-

forming him, that he had been advised to dispute the title to the Percy estate, that he had the opinion of the first lawyers in England in his favor,—and that he had given directions to his Solicitor, Mr. Sharpe, to commence a suit, to reinstate the lawful heir in the property of his ancestors.—Sir Robert Percy added something about his reluctance to go to law, and a vast deal about candor, justice, and family friendship, which it would be needless and unreasonable to repeat.

Fresh search was now made for the lost deed, but in vain.—And in vain Rosamond reproached herself with having betrayed the secret of that loss to the revengeful attorney.—The ensuing post brought notice from Mr. Sharpe, that proceedings were commenced.—In Sir Robert's letter, though not in the attorney's, there was obviously left an opening for an offer to compromise; this was done either with intent to lure Mr. Percy on to make an offer, which might afterwards appear against him, or it was done in the

hope, that, intimidated by the fear of an expensive and hazardous suit, Mr. Percy might give up half his estate, to secure the quiet possession of the remainder. But they knew little of Mr. Percy, who argued in this manner; he was neither to be lured nor intimidated from his right.—All compromise, "all terms of commerce he disdained."—He sent no answer, but prepared to make a vigorous defence. For this purpose he wrote to his son Alfred, desiring him to spare no pains or expense, to engage the best counsel, and to put them in full possession of the cause. Alfred regretted, that he was not of sufficient standing at the bar to take the lead in conducting his father's cause. He, however, prepared all the documents with great care and ability; from time to time, as the business went on, he wrote to his father in good spirits, saying, that he had excellent hopes they should succeed, notwithstanding the unfortunate loss of the deed; that the more he considered the case, the more clearly

the justice of their cause, and the solidity of their right appeared. Alas! Alfred showed himself to be but a young lawyer, in depending so much upon right and justice, while a point of law was against him. It is unnecessary, and would be equally tedious and unintelligible to most readers, to dwell upon the details of this suit. Contrary to the usual complaints of the law's delay, this cause went through the Courts in a short time, because Mr. Percy did not make use of any subterfuge to protract the business. A decree was given in favor of Sir Robert Percy, and he became the legal possessor of the great Percy estate in Hampshire, which had been so long the object of his machinations.

Thus, at one stroke, the Percy family fell from the station and affluence, which they had so long, and, in the opinion of all who knew them, so well enjoyed. Great was the regret among the higher classes, and great, indeed, the lamentations of the poor in the neighborhood,

when the decree was made known.—It seemed as if the change in their situation was deplored as a general misfortune, and as if it were felt by all more than by the sufferers themselves, who were never seen to give way to weak complaints, or heard to utter an invective against their adversary. This magnanimity increased the public sympathy, and pity for them was soon converted into indignation against Sir Robert Percy.——Naturally insolent, and now elated with success, he wrote post after post to express his impatience to come and take possession of his estate, and to hasten the departure of his relations from the family seat. This was as cruel as it was unnecessary, for from the moment when they learnt the event of the trial, they had been occupied with the preparations for their departure; for the resignation of all the conveniences and luxuries they possessed, all the pleasures associated with the idea of home; for parting with all the ani-

mate and inanimate objects, to which they had long and early habits of affection and attachment. This family had never been proud in prosperity, nor were they abject in adversity. They submitted with fortitude to their fate. Yet they could not, without regret, leave the place where they had spent so many happy years.

It had been settled, that the improvements which Mr. Percy had made on the estate, the expense of the buildings and furniture at Percy-Hall, of which a valuation had been made, should be taken in lieu of all arrears of rent, to which Sir Robert might lay claim. In consequence of this award, Mr. Percy and his family were anxious to leave every thing about the house and place in perfect order, that they might fulfil punctually their part of the agreement. The evening before they were to quit Percy-Hall, they went into every room, to take a review of the whole. The house was peculiarly convenient and well

arranged. Mr. Percy had spared nothing to render it in every respect agreeable, not only to his guests, but to his family, to make his children happy in their home. His daughters' apartments he had fitted up for them in the neatest manner, and they had taken pleasure in ornamenting them with their own work and drawings. They felt very melancholy the evening they were to take leave of these for ever. They took down some of their drawings, and all the little trophies preserved from childhood, memorials of early ingenuity or taste, which could be of no use or value to any one except to themselves; every thing else they agreed to leave as usual, to show how kind their father had been to them —a sentiment well suited to their good and innocent minds. They opened their writing-tables and their drawing-boxes for the last time; for the last time they put fresh flowers into their flower-pots, and, with a sigh, left their little apartments.

All the family then went out to walk in the park and through the shrubberies. It was a delightful summer's evening, the birds were singing—" Caring little," as Rosamond said, " for our going away." ——The sun was just setting, and they thought they had never seen the place look so beautiful. Indeed Mr. and Mrs. Percy had, for many years, delighted in cultivating the natural beauties of this picturesque situation, and their improvements were now beginning to appear to advantage.——But they were never to enjoy the success of their labors!—— The old steward followed the family in this walk. He stopped every now and then to deplore over each fine tree or shrub as they passed, and could scarcely refrain from bursting into invectives against " *him* that was coming after them into possession."—

" The whole country cries shame upon the villain" . . . John began, but Mr. Percy, with a smile, stopped him.

" Let us bear our misfortunes, John,

with a good grace—Let us be thankful for the happiness which we have enjoyed, and submit ourselves to the will of Providence.—Without any hypocrisy or affected resignation, I say, at this instant, what, with my whole heart, I feel, that I submit, without repining, to the will of God, and firmly believe that all is for the best."—

"And so I strive to do"—said John—"But only, I say, if it had pleased God to order it otherwise, it's a pity the wicked should come *just* after us to enjoy themselves, when they have robbed us of all."—

"Not of all"—said Mr. Percy.

"What is it they have not robbed us of," cried John, "not a thing but they must have from us"—

"No; the best of all things we keep for ourselves—It cannot be taken from us—a good conscience."

"Worth all the rest—that's true"—said John, "and that is what he will never have, who is coming here to mor-

row—Never—never—They say he don't sleep at nights—But I'll say no more about him—Only . . . he's not a good man . . ."

"I am sure, John, you are not a good courtier," said Mrs. Percy, smiling—"You ought to prepare to pay your court to your new master."

"*My* new master!" cried John, growing red, "the longest day ever I live, I'll never have a new master—All that I have in the world came from you, and I'll never have another master—Sure you will let me follow you? . . . I will be no trouble: though but little, may be I can do something, still. Surely, Madam . . . Surely, Sir . . . young ladies, you'll speak for me . . . I shall be let to follow the fortunes of the family, and go along with you into *banishment*."

"My good John," said Mr. Percy, "since you desire to follow us into *banishment*, as you call it, you shall; and as long as we have any thing upon earth, you shall never want. You must

stay here to morrow, after we are gone, to give up possession." . . . . (John could not stand this, but turned away to hide his face) . . . . " When your business is done," continued Mr. Percy, " you may set out and follow us as soon as you please."—

" I thank you, Sir, kindly," said John, with a most grateful bow, that took in all the family, " that's new life to me."—

He said not a word more during the rest of the walk, except just as he passed near the beach where the ship was wrecked, he exclaimed, " There was the first beginning of all our misfortunes: who would have thought, that when we gave them shelter we should be turned out so soon ourselves? 'twas that drunken rascal of a Dutch carpenter was the cause of all!"

The next morning the whole family set out in an open carriage, which had been made for the purpose of carrying as many of the young people as possible

upon excursions of pleasure. It was a large sociable, which they used to call their *caravan.*

At the great gate of the park old John stopped the carriage, and leaning over to his master, whispered——" I beg your pardon, Sir, but God bless you, and don't drive through the village—If you please take the back road, for I've just learned, that *he* is on the great road, and as near hand as the turn at the school-house, and they say he wants to be driving in his coach and four through the village as you are all going out—Now I would n't for any thing he had that triumph over us."

" Thank you, good John," said Mr. Percy, " but such triumphs cannot mortify us."

Poor John reluctantly opened the gate and let the carriage pass—They drove on—They cast a lingering look behind as they quitted the park.

——" Must I then leave thee, Paradise !"——

As they passed through the village the poor people came out of their houses to take leave of their excellent landlord; they flocked round the carriage, and hung upon it till it stopped, and then, with one voice, they poured forth praises, and blessings, and prayers for better days. Just at this moment Sir Robert Percy made his appearance. His equipage was splendid; his coachman drove his four fine horses down the street, the middle of which was cleared in an instant.—The crowd gazed at the show as it passed,—Sir Robert gave a signal to his coachman to drive slower, that he might longer enjoy the triumph—He put his head out of the coach window, but no one cried, "God bless him." ——His insolence was obviously mortified as he passed the Percy family, for Mr. Percy bowed with an air of dignity and cheerfulness which seemed to say ——"My fortune is yours—but I am still myself."——Some of the spectators clapped their hands, and some wept.

Mr. Percy seemed to have prepared his mind for every circumstance of his departure, and to be perfectly composed, or at least master of his feelings—But a small incident, for which he had been unprepared, suddenly moved him almost to tears. As they crossed the bridge, which was at the farthest end of the village, they heard the * muffled bells of the church toll as if for a public calamity. Instantly recollecting the resentment to which these poor people were exposing themselves by this mark of their affection and regret, Mr. Percy went by a short path to the church as quickly as possible, and had the bells unmuffled.

* On Mr. Morris's departure from Piercefield the same circumstance happened.

CHAPTER XII.

MR. PERCY fortunately possessed, independently of the Percy estate, a farm worth about seven or eight hundred a year, which he had purchased with part of his wife's fortune; on which he had built a Lodge, that he had intended for the future residence of one of his sons. *The Hills* was the name of this Lodge, to which all the family now retired. Though it was in the same county with Percy-Hall, Clermont-Park, Falconer-Court, Hungerford-Castle, and within reach of several other gentlemen's seats, yet from it's being in a hilly part of the country, through which no regular road had been made, it was little frequented, and gave the idea not only of complete retirement, but of remoteness. Though a lonely situation, it was, however, a beautiful one.

The house stood on the brow of a hill, and looked into a deep glen, through the steep descent of which ran a clear and copious rivulet rolling over a stony bed; the rocks were covered with mountain flowers, and wild shrubs . . . . . But nothing is more tiresome than a picture in prose. We shall, therefore, beg our readers to recal to their imagination some of the views they may have seen in Wales, and they will probably have a better idea of this place, than any that we could give by the most labored description, amplified with all the epithets in the English language. . . . . .

The house at the Hills, though finished, was yet but scantily furnished, and was so small, that it could hardly hold the family, who were now obliged to take refuge in it. However, they were well disposed to accommodate each other; they had habits of order, and had so little accustomed themselves to be waited upon, that this sudden change in their fortune and way of life did not appear terrible as

it would to many in the same rank. Undoubtedly they felt the loss of real conveniences, but they were not tormented with ideal wants, or with the pangs of mortified vanity. Evils they had to bear, but they were not the most dreadful of all evils,—those of the imagination. They felt themselves sustained in adversity, not by the obstinacy of pride, or the evanescent spirit of romance, but by the permanent power of true philosophy and religion.

Mr. Percy, to whom his whole family looked for counsel and support, now showed all the energy and decision of his character. What he knew must be done sooner or later he did decidedly at first. The superfluities, to which his family had been accustomed, were instantly abandoned. The great torment of decayed gentry is the remembrance of their former station, and a weak desire still to appear what their fortune no longer allows them to be. This folly Mr. Percy had not to combat in his family, where all

were eager to resign even more of their own comforts than the occasion required, and where all were anxious to exert themselves to contribute to the good of the whole, without considering any thing they were able to do for this purpose as a degradation. It was the object now for the family who were at home, to live as frugally as possible, that they might save as much of their small income as they could, to assist and forward the sons in their professions.

The eldest son, Godfrey, could not yet have heard of the change in his father's fortune, and in his own expectations; but from a passage in his last letter, it was evident that he had some idea of the possibility of such a reverse, and that he was preparing himself to live with economy. From Alfred and Erasmus Mr. Percy had at this trying time the satisfaction of receiving at once the kindest and the most manly letters, containing strong expressions of gratitude to their father for having given them such an education

as would enable them, notwithstanding the loss of hereditary fortune, to become independent and respectable. What would have been the difference of their fate, and of their feelings, had they been suffered to grow up into mere idle lounging gentlemen, or four-in-hand coachmen!—In different words, but with the same spirit, both brothers declared that this change in the circumstances of their family did not depress their minds, but, on the contrary, gave them new and powerful motives for exertion. It seemed to be the first wish of their souls, to fulfil the fond hopes and predictions of their father, and to make some return for the care their parents had taken of their education.

They were determined, that no honorable opportunity of distinguishing, or advancing themselves, should pass unimproved; and they looked forward with confident hope to the time when their perseverance should be rewarded, and when, instead of being an expense to

their father, they might share with their family the profits of Law and Medicine.

Their father, pleased by the sanguine hopes and ardent spirit expressed in these letters, had too much experience to sympathize entirely in this enthusiasm. He was sensible, that a considerable time must elapse before they could make any thing by law or medicine. They were as yet only in the outset of their professions, the difficult beginning, when men must toil often without reward, be subject to crosses and losses, and rebukes and rebuffs, when their rivals push them back, and when they want the assistance of friends to help them forward, whilst with scarcely the means to live they must appear like gentlemen.

Beside the faithful steward, two servants, who were much attached to the family, accompanied them to their retirement. One was Mrs. Harte, who had lived with Mrs. Percy above thirty years; and who, from being a housekeeper with

handsome wages and plenary power over a numerous household at Percy-Hall, now served with increased zeal at the Hills, doing a great part of the work of the house herself, with the assistance only of a stout country girl newly hired, whose awkwardness and ignorance, or, as Mrs. Harte expressed it, whose *comical ways*, she bore with a patience that cost her more than all the rest. The other servant, who followed the altered fortunes of the Percy family, was a young man of the name of Johnson, whom Mr. Percy had bred up from a boy, and who was so creditable a servant, that he could readily have obtained a place with high wages in any opulent family, either in the country, or in London; but he chose to abide by his master, who could now only afford to give him very little. Indeed Mr. Percy would not have kept any male servant in his present circumstances, but out of regard for this young man, who seemed miserable at the thoughts of leaving him, and who undertook to make

himself useful in the farm, as well as in the house.

Very different was Johnson from the present race of *fine* town servants, who follow with no unequal steps the follies and vices of their *betters*, and who, by their insolence and extravagance, become the just torments of their masters.—Very different was Johnson from some country servants, who with gross selfishness look solely to their own eating and drinking, and whose only thought is how to swallow as much, and do as little as possible. Those, who have been acquainted only with servants of this description, will deem the account of Johnson and Mrs. Harte to be romantic and incredible; but it is to be hoped that there are some, who have had happier experience, and who can testify that servants, who have been brought up in well regulated families, who have never been exposed to the example of profligacy, or to temptations to extravagance, and who have been treated with judicious kindness, are capable of

the attachment, fidelity, and disinterested gratitude, which is here recorded.

Beside the assistance that he received from these servants in settling his family comfortably in their new and much confined habitation, Mr. Percy's own skill as a workman proved of signal service. It had always been his opinion, that a country gentleman ought to understand the principles of mechanics and architecture, that he might at least be capable of directing the workmen he employs.

In the remote part of the country where he now resided, no tolerable workmen were to be had, and in a thousand little instances, which make no figure in history, but which produce great effect in the daily comforts of a house, Mr. Percy's family felt the advantage of his mechanical knowledge.

As soon as he had settled his home, Mr. Percy looked abroad to a tract of improvable ground, on which he might employ his agricultural skill.——Adam Smith says that many gentlemen, parti-

cularly those, who have retired from trade, are apt to injure themselves by sanguine speculations in agriculture. But those, who have lived on their own estates, and who have been in the habit of attending to country business, are sufficiently acquainted with the details of practice, to guard against the fallacies of theory. Smith further observes, that the rich usually lose by carrying on improvements, because they trust to stewards, agents, and factors of various denominations, by whom they are cheated. But this is not an inevitable evil, neither is it essential to their condition; they may see with their own eyes, and, better still, they may attach to them persons, who will not be merely eye-servants.—Even when he labored under the disadvantage of being rich, Mr. Percy contrived to do this, and he seemed likely to reap the benefit of his prudence now that he had become poor. He had reason to rejoice in having really led the life of a country gentleman. He understood the business of an agri-

culturist, and he was ably assisted in all the details of farming and management by those servants, whom he had attached to him whilst he was opulent. Never in the most prosperous days did the old steward seem so fully interested in his master's affairs, so punctual and active in executing his commands, and, above all, so respectful in his manner to his master, as now in his fallen fortunes.

It would be uninteresting to readers who are not farmers, to enter into a detail of Mr. Percy's probable improvements. It is enough to say, that his hopes were founded upon experience, and upon calculations, and that he was a man capable of calculating. He had been long in the habit of keeping accurate accounts, not such as gentlemen display when they are pleased to prove that their demesne, or their farm, produces more than ever farm or demesne produced before. Mr. Percy's exact accounts, and his habits of regularity, were really of use to him, both as they regarded the past and the future.

All the tradesmen with whom he had dealt were, notwithstanding his change of fortune, ready to trust him; and those who were strangers, and whom he had now occasion to employ, finding themselves regularly paid, soon acquired confidence in his punctuality. So that far from being terrified at having so little, he felt surprised at having still so much money at his command.—The enjoyment of high credit must surely give more pleasurable feelings than the mere possession of wealth.

Often, during the first year after he had been deprived of the Percy estate, Mr. Percy declared, that, as to himself, he had actually lost nothing; for he had never been expensive or luxurious; his personal enjoyments were nearly the same, and his active pursuits were not very different from what they had always been. He had, it is true, less time than he wished to give to literature, or to indulge in the company and conversation of his wife and daughters; but even the

pain of this privation was compensated by the pleasure he felt in observing the excellencies in their characters, which adversity developed.——How much temper and strength of mind are necessary, to enable women to support the loss of wealth and station!—A man who has received a liberal education may maintain himself with honor by the exertion of his abilities in respectable professions, and in a variety of employments, which are allowed to be gentlemanlike. In doing this he continues to be on a footing with his equals in birth; his personal merit and mental qualifications ensure him admission into the first societies; but a woman, by the caprice, the cruelty of custom, is degraded by the very industry which should obtain respect, and, if unmarried, she loses the prospect of being suitably established in life. Mr. Percy, aware of these circumstances, now looked upon his daughters with peculiar tenderness, as he saw them bear their change of fortune cheerfully.——It has by some

persons been thought, that women who have been suffered to acquire literary tastes, whose understandings have been cultivated and refined, are apt to disdain, or to become unfit for the useful minutiæ of domestic duties. In the education of her daughters, Mrs. Percy had guarded against this danger, whilst, at the same time, she had encouraged them to cultivate a taste for literature, which adds so much in all conditions of life to the capacity for happiness. Her object had not been to make them merely accomplished and showy, she had endeavored to render them amiable and useful, and she now experienced the happy effects of her prudence. Instead of seeing her daughters sighing for pleasures that were out of their reach, she found them contented, active, and useful, in their humble home. At first they had felt it somewhat irksome, in their change of circumstances, to be forced to spend a considerable portion of their time in preparation for the mere business of living, but

they perceived, that this constraint gave a higher relish to their favorite employments, and a new spring to their minds. After the domestic business of the day was done, they enjoyed, with fresh delight, the pleasures of which it is not in the power of fortune to deprive us.

Soon after the Percy family were settled at the Hills, they were surprised by a visit from Commissioner Falconer—*surprised*—because, though they knew that he had a certain degree of common-place friendship for them as relations, yet they were aware, that his regard was not independent of fortune, and they had never supposed, that he would come to seek them in their retirement. After some general expressions of condolence on their losses, their change of situation, and the inconveniences to which a large family, bred up, as they had been, in affluence, must suffer in their present abode, he went out to walk with Mr. Percy, and he then began to talk over his own family affairs. With polite acknowledgment

to Mr. Percy of the advantage he had derived from his introduction to Lord Oldborough, and with modestly implied compliments to his own address in turning that introduction to the best possible account, Mr. Falconer led to the subject on which he wanted to dilate.

"You see, my dear Mr. Percy," said he, "without vanity, I may now venture to say, my plans for advancing my family have all succeeded; my sons have risen in the world, or rather have been pushed up beyond my most sanguine hopes."

"I give you joy with all my heart," —said Mr. Percy.

"But, my good Sir, listen to me; your sons might have been in as advantageous situations, if you had not been too proud to profit by the evidently favorable dispositions, which Lord Oldborough showed towards you and yours."

"Too proud! no, my friend, I assure you, pride never influenced my conduct; I acted from principle."

"So you are pleased to call it.—But we will not go back to the past—no man likes to acknowledge he has been wrong.—Let us, if you please, look to the future. You know that you are now in a different situation from what you were formerly, when you could afford to follow your principles, or your systems. Now, my dear Sir, give me leave to tell you, that it is your duty, absolutely your duty, to make use of your interest for your sons. There is not a man in England, who, if he chose it, might secure for his sons a better patron than you could."

"I trust," replied Mr. Percy, "that I have secured for my sons what is better than a good patron,—a good education."

"Both are best," said Mr. Falconer. "Proud as you are, cousin Percy, you must allow this, when you look round, and see who rises, and how.—And now we are by ourselves, let me ask you frankly, and seriously, why do you object to patronage?"

"Frankly and seriously then, because I detest and despise the whole system of patronage."

"That's very *strong*," said Mr. Falconer. "And I am glad for your sake, and for the sake of your family, that nobody heard it, but myself."

"If the whole world heard me," pursued Mr. Percy, "I should say just the same—*Strong*—very strong!—I am glad of it—for—(Excuse me,—you are my relation, and we are on terms of familiarity) the delicate, guarded, qualifying, trimming, mincing, pouncet-box, gentleman-usher mode of speaking truth, makes no sort of impression. Truth should always be strong,—speaking, or acting."

"Well! well! I beg your pardon; as strong let it be as you please, only let it be cool, and then we cannot fail to understand one another. I think you were going to explain to me why you detest and despise what you call the system of patronage."

"Because, I believe it to be ruinous to my country. Whenever the honors of professions, civil, military, or ecclesiastical, are bestowed by favor, not earned by merit; whenever the places of trust and dignity in a state are to be gained by intrigue and solicitation, there is an end of generous emulation, and consequently of exertion. Talents and integrity, in losing their reward of glory, lose their vigour, and often their very existence. If the affairs of this nation were guided, and if her battles were fought by the corrupt, imbecile creatures of patronage, how would they be guided?—how fought?—Wo be to the country, that trusts to such rulers and such defenders! Wo has been to every country, that has so trusted.—May such never be the fate of England!—And that it never may, let every honest independent Englishman set his face, his hand, his heart against this base, this ruinous system!—I will for one."—

"For one!—alas!" said Mr. Falco-

ner, with a sigh meant to be heard, and a smile not intended to be seen.—— "What can one do in such a desperate case?—I am afraid certain things will go on in the world for ever, whether we profit by them or not.—And if I grant that patronage is sometimes a public evil, you must allow that it is often a private benefit."

"I doubt even that," said Mr. Percy; "for those young men, who are brought up to expect patronage in any profession . . . . But," said Mr. Percy, checking himself,—"I forget who I am speaking to; I don't wish to say any thing that can hurt your feelings, especially, when you are so kind to come to see me in adversity, and when you show so much interest in my affairs."

"Oh! pray go on, go on," said the Commissioner, smiling, "you will not hurt me, I assure you; consider I am too firm in the success of my system, to be easily offended on that point.—Go on —Those young men who are brought

up to expect patronage in any profession"—

Are apt to depend upon it too much," continued Mr. Percy. "and consequently neglect to acquire knowledge. They know, that things will be passed over for them, and they think that they need not be assiduous, because they are secure of being provided for, independently of their own exertions; and if they have a turn for extravagance, they may indulge it, because a place will set all to rights."

"And if they are provided for, and if they do get good places, are not they well enough off?" said Mr. Falconer—"I'll answer for it, your sons would think so?"

Mr. Percy, with a look of proud humility, replied, "I am inclined to believe, that my sons would not think themselves *well off*, unless they were distinguished by their own merit."

"To be sure,"—said Mr. Falconer, correcting himself—"of course I mean

that too; but a young man can never distinguish himself, you know, so well as when his merit is raised to a conspicuous situation—"

"Or disgrace himself so effectually, as when he is raised to a situation for which he is unprepared and unfit."

The Commissioner's brow clouded—some unpleasant reflection or apprehension seemed to cross his mind.—Mr. Percy had no intention of raising any; he meant no allusion to the Commissioner's sons—he hastened to turn what he had said more decidedly upon his own.

"I have chosen for my sons, or rather they have chosen for themselves," continued he,—"professions which are independent of influence, and in which it could be of little use to them. Patrons can be of little advantage to a lawyer or a physician.—No judge, no attorney, can push a lawyer up, beyond a certain point—he may rise like a rocket, but he will fall like a stick, if he be not sup-

ported by his own inherent powers.—Where property or life is at stake, men will not compliment, or even be influenced by great recommendations—they will consult the best lawyer, and the best physician, whoever he may be.—I have endeavored to give my Alfred and Erasmus such an education, as shall enable them honestly to work their own way to eminence."

"A friend's helping hand is no bad thing," said Mr. Falconer, "in that hard and slippery ascent."

"As many friends, as many helping hands in a fair way, as you please," said Mr. Percy—"I by no means would inculcate the antisocial, absurd, impossible doctrine, that young men, or any men, can, or ought to be independent of the world. Let my sons make friends for themselves, and enjoy the advantage of mine. I object only to their becoming dependant, wasting the best years of their lives in a miserable, debasing servitude to patrons—to patrons, who at last may

perhaps capriciously desert them at their utmost need."

Again, without designing it, Mr. Percy wakened unpleasant recollections in the mind of the Commissioner.

"Ah! there you touch a tender string with me"—said Mr. Falconer, sighing. "I have known something of that in my life. Lord N—— and Mr. G—— did indeed use me shamefully ill.—But I was young then, and did not choose my friends well. I know more of the world now, and have done better for my sons—and shall do better, I trust, for myself.—In the mean time, my dear Mr. Percy, let us think of your affairs.—Such a man as you should not be lost here on a farm amongst turnips and carrots.—So Lord Oldborough says and thinks—and, in short, to come to the point at once, I was not sounding you from idle curiosity respecting patronage, or from any impertinent desire to interfere with your concerns; but I come, commissioned by Lord Oldborough, to make an offer,

which, I am persuaded, whatever theoretical objections might occur," said the Commissioner with a significant smile,— "Mr. Percy is too much a man of practical sense to reject. Lord Oldborough empowers me to say, that it is his wish to see his government supported and strengthened by men of Mr. Percy's talents and character; that he is persuaded, that Mr. Percy would speak well in parliament; that if Mr. Percy will join *us*, his Lordship will bring him into parliament, and give him thus an opportunity of at once distinguishing himself, advancing his family, repairing the injustice of fortune, and serving his country."

Commissioner Falconer made this offer with much pomposity, with the air of a person sure that he is saying something infinitely flattering, and at the same time with a lurking smile on his countenance, at the idea of the ease and certainty with which this offer would induce Mr. Percy to recant all he had said against patrons

and patronage.—He was curious to hear how the philosopher would change his tone; but, to his surprise, Mr. Percy did not alter it in the least.

He returned his respectful and grateful acknowledgments to Lord Oldborough, but begged leave totally to decline the honor intended him; he could not, he said, accept it consistently with his principles—He could not go into parliament with a view to advance himself, or to provide for his family.

The Commissioner interrupted to *qualify*, for he was afraid he had spoken too broadly, and observed that what he had said was quite confidential.

Mr. Percy understood it so, and assured him there was no danger that it should be repeated.——The Commissioner was then in a state to listen again quietly.

Mr. Percy said, that when he was rich, he had preferred domestic happiness to ambition, therefore he had never stood for the county to which he belonged; that

now he was poor, he felt an additional reason for keeping out of parliament, that he might not put himself in a situation to be tempted—A situation where he must spend more than he could afford, and could only pay his expenses by selling his conscience.—

The Commissioner was silent with astonishment for some moments after Mr. Percy ceased speaking.—He had always thought his good cousin a singular man, but he had never thought him a wrongheaded fool till this moment.—At first he was somewhat vexed, for Mr. Percy's sake and for the sake of his sons, that he refused such an offer—for the Commissioner had some of the feelings of a relation—but more the habits of a politician; and these last, in a few moments, reconciled him to what he thought the ruin of his cousin's prospects in life. Mr. Falconer considered, that if Mr. Percy were to go into parliament, to join their party, and to get near Lord Oldborough, he might become a danger-

ous rival. He pressed the matter, therefore, no longer with urgency, but only just sufficient to enable him to report to Lord Oldborough, that he had executed his commission, but had found Mr. Percy *impracticable.*

CHAPTER XIII.

HOWEVER sincere the general pity and esteem for the Percy family, they did not escape the common lot of mortality; they had their share of blame, as well as of condolence, from their friends and acquaintance. Some discovered, that all the misfortunes of the family might have been avoided, if they had listened to good advice—others were quite clear, that the lawsuit would have been decided in Mr. Percy's favor, if he had employed their solicitor or their barrister, or, in short, if every step of the suit had been directed differently.—

Commissioner Falconer now joined the band of reproaching friends. He did not blame Mr. Percy, however, for the conduct of the lawsuit, for of that he con-

fessed himself to be no judge, but he thought he understood the right way of advancing a family in the world, and on this subject he now took a higher tone than he had formerly felt himself entitled to assume—Success gives such rights!—especially over the unfortunate.——The Commissioner said loudly in all companies, that he had hoped his relation, Mr. Percy, who certainly was a man of talents, and he was convinced well-intentioned, would not have shown himself so obstinately attached to his peculiar opinions—especially to his strange notions of independence, which must disgust, ultimately, friends whom it was most the interest of his family to please—that he doubted not that the young men of the Percy family bitterly regretted, that their father would not avail himself of the advantages of his connexions, of the favorable dispositions, and, to his knowledge, most *condescending* offers that had been made to him——offers which, the Commissioner said, he must term really condescending, when

he considered, that Mr. Percy had never paid the common court that was expected by a minister.—Other circumstances, too, enhanced the favor.—Offence had undoubtedly been given by the ill-timed, injudicious interference of Captain Godfrey Percy about regimental business,—some Major Gascoigne,—yet, notwithstanding this, a certain person, whose steadiness in his friendships the Commissioner declared he could never sufficiently admire, had not, for the son's errors, changed his favorable opinion or disposition towards the father.

Mr. Falconer concluded, with a sigh, "There are some men whom the best of friends cannot serve—and such we can only leave to their fate."

The Commissioner now considering Mr. Percy as a person so obstinately odd, that it was unsafe for a rising man to have any thing more to do with him, it was agreed in the Falconer family, that it was necessary to let the Percys drop gently. Mrs. Falconer and her daugh-

ters having always resided in London during the winter, and at some watering-place in summer, knew scarcely any thing of the female part of the Percy family. Mrs. Falconer had occasionally met Mrs. Percy, but the young ladies, who had not yet been in town, she had never seen since they were children. Mrs. Falconer now considered this as a peculiarly fortunate circumstance, because she could not be blamed for *cutting* them, and should escape all the *unpleasantness* of breaking off an intimacy with relations.

The Commissioner acceded to all his lady's observations, and easily shook off that attachment, which he had professed for so many years, perhaps felt, for his *good cousin Percy*—perhaps felt, we say; because we really believe, that he was attached to Mr. Percy while that gentleman was in prosperity. There are persons who have an exclusive sympathy with the prosperous.

There was one, however, who, in this

respect, felt differently from the rest of the family. Buckhurst Falconer, with a generous impulse of affection and gratitude, declared that he would not desert Mr. Percy or any of the family in adversity; he could never forget how kind they had been to him when he was in distress. Buckhurst's resentment against Caroline for her repeated refusals suddenly subsided, his attachment revived with redoubled force. He protested, that he loved her the better for having lost her fortune, and he reiterated this protestation more loudly, because his father declared it was absurd and ridiculous. The son persisted, till the father, though not subject to make violent resolutions, was wrought to such a pitch as to swear, that if Buckhurst should be fool enough to think seriously of a girl who was now a beggar, he would absolutely refuse his consent to the match, and would never give his son a shilling.

Buckhurst immediately wrote to Caroline, a passionate declaration of the con-

stancy and ardor of his attachment, and entreated her permission to wait upon her immediately.

"Do not sacrifice me," said Buckhurst, "to idle niceties.—That I have many faults I am conscious, but none, I trust, for which you ought utterly to condemn me—none but what you can cure.—I am ready to be every thing which you approve.—Give me but leave to hope.—There is no sacrifice I will not make to facilitate, to expedite our union. I have been ordained, one living I possess, and that which Colonel Hauton has promised me will soon come into my possession.—Believe me I was decided to go into the church by my attachment. To my passion for you, every scruple, every consideration gave way. —As to the rest, I shall never be deterred from following the dictates of my heart, by the opposition of ambitious parents.——Caroline, do not sacrifice me to idle niceties—I know I have the misfortune not to please your brother

Alfred—to do him justice, he has fairly told me that he does not think me worthy of *his sister Caroline*—I forgive him, I admire him for the pride with which he pronounces the words, *my sister Caroline.* ——But though she may easily find a more faultless character, she will never find a warmer heart, or one more truly, more ardently attached."

There was something frank, warm, and generous in this letter, which pleased Rosamond, and which, she said, justified her good opinion of Buckhurst.—Indeed the great merit of being ardently attached to her sister Caroline was sufficient, in Rosamond's eyes, to cover a multitude of sins; and the contrast between his warmth at this moment, and the coldness of the rest of his family, struck her forcibly. Rosamond thought that Alfred had been too severe in his judgment, and observed, that it was in vain to look with a lantern all over the world for a faultless character—a monster!—It was quite sufficient, if a woman could find an

honest man—that she was sure Buckhurst had no faults, but what love would cure.

"But love has not cured him of any yet," said Caroline.

"Try marriage," said Rosamond, laughing.

Caroline shook her head,——"Consider at what expense that trial must be made."—

At the first reading of Buckhurst's letter, Caroline had been pleased with it; but on a second perusal, she was dissatisfied with the passage about his parents, nor could she approve of his giving up what he now called his *scruples*, to obtain a competence for the woman he professed to adore. She knew that he had been leading a dissipated life in town: that he must, therefore, be less fit than he formerly was, to make a good husband, and still less likely to make a respectable clergyman. He had some right feeling, but no steady principle, as Caroline observed. She was grateful

for the constancy of his attachment, and for the generosity he showed in his whole conduct towards her, nor was she insensible to the urgency with which Rosamond pleaded in his favor; but she was firm in her own judgment, and her refusal, though expressed in the terms that could best soften the pain it must give, was as decided as possible.

Soon after her letter had been sent, she and Rosamond had taken a longer walk, one evening, than usual, and eager in conversation, went on so far in this wild unfrequented part of the country, that when they saw the sun setting, they began to fear they should not reach home before it was dark. They wished to find a shorter way home than that by which they went, and they looked about in hopes of seeing some laborer (some *swinked hedger*) returning from his work, or a cottage where they could meet with a guide.—But there was no person or house within sight. At last Caroline, who had climbed upon a high bank in

the lane where they were walking, saw a smoke rising between some trees at a little distance; and toward this spot they made their way through another lane, the entrance to which had been stopped up with furze bushes.—They soon came within sight of a poor looking cottage, and saw a young woman walking very slowly with a child in her arms. She was going towards the house, and did not perceive the young ladies till they were close to her. She turned suddenly when they spoke, started—looked frightened and confused; the infant began to cry, and hushing it as well as she could, she answered to their questions with a bewildered look, "I don't know indeed—I can't tell —I don't know any thing, ladies—ask at the cottage, yonder."—Then she quickened her pace, and walked so fast to the house, that they could hardly keep up with her. She pushed open the hatch door, and called, "Dorothy! Dorothy, come out."—But no Dorothy answered. —The young woman seemed at a loss

what to do; and as she stood hesitating, her face, which had at first appeared pale and emaciated, flushed up to her temples. She looked very handsome, but in ill-health.

"Be pleased, ladies," . . . . said she, with diffidence, and trembling from head to foot—"Be pleased to sit down and rest, ladies.—One will be in directly, who knows the ways—I am a stranger in these parts."

As soon as she had set the chairs, she was retiring to an inner room, but her child, who was pleased with Caroline's face as she smiled and nodded at him, stretched out his little hand towards her.

"Oh! let my sister give him a kiss," said Rosamond.—The mother stopped, yet appeared unwilling. The child patted Caroline's cheek, played with her hair, and laughed aloud.—Caroline offered to take the child in her arms, but the mother held him fast, and escaped into the inner room, where they heard her sobbing violently.——Caroline and

Rosamond looked at one another in silence, and left the cottage by tacit consent, sorry that they had given pain, and feeling that they had no right to intrude farther.—"We can go home the same way that we came," said Caroline, "and that is better than to trouble any body."

"Certainly," said Rosamond: "yet I should like to know something more about this poor woman if I could, without .... If we happened to meet Dorothy, whoever she is."

At this instant they saw an old woman come from a copse near the cottage, with a bundle of sticks on her back, and a tin can in her hand. This was Dorothy; she saved them all the trouble and delicacy of asking questions, for there was not a more communicative creature breathing, nor a better natured. She, in the first place, threw down her faggots, and offered her service to guide the young ladies home; she guessed they belonged to the family that was newly come to settle at the Hills, which she

described, though she could not tell the name.—She would not be denied the pleasure of showing them the shortest and safest way, and the only way by which they could get home before it was night fall. So they accepted her kind offer, and she trudged on, talking as she went.

"It is a weary thing, ladies, to live in this lone place, where one does not see a soul to speak to from one month's end to another—especially to me that has lived afore now in my younger days in Lon'on. But it's as God pleases!—and I wish none had greater troubles in this world than I——You were up at the house, ladies? There within at my little place—Ay—then you saw the greatest and the only great trouble I have, or ever had in this life.——Did not you, ladies, see the young woman with the child in her arms?—But may be you did not mind Kate, and she's nothing now to look at, quite faded and gone, though she's only one month past

nineteen years of age.—I am sure I ought to know, for I was at her christening, and nursed her mother.—She's of very good parentage, that is, of a farmer's family, that *has*, as well as his neighbors,—that lives a great way off, quite on the other side of the county.—And not a year, at least not a year and a half ago, I remember Kate Robinson dancing on the green at Squire Burton's there with the rest of the girls of the village, and without compare the prettiest and freshest, and most blithsome and innocent of them all——Ay, she was innocent then, none ever more so, and she had no care, but all looking kind upon her in this world, and fond parents taking pride in her—and now look at her what she is?—Cast off by all, shamed, and forgotten, and broken-hearted, and lost as much as if she was in her grave.—And better she was in her grave than as she is—"

The old woman now really felt so

much, that she stopped speaking, and was silent for several minutes.

"Ah! dear ladies," said she, looking up at Rosamond and Caroline, "I see you have kind hearts within you, and I thank you for pitying poor Kate."

"I wish we could do any thing to serve her," said Caroline.

"Ah! Miss, that I am afraid you can't, that's what I am afraid none can now."——The good woman paused and looked, as if she expected to be questioned.—Caroline was silent, and the old woman looked disappointed.—

"We do not like to question you," said Rosamond, "lest we should ask what you might not like to answer, or . . . what the young woman would be sorry that you should answer."

"Why, Miss, that's very considerate in you, and only that I know it would be for her benefit, I am sure I would not have said a word—but here I have so very little to give her, and that little

so coarse fare to what she been used to, both when she was at service, and when she was with her own people, that I be afraid, weak as she be grown now, she won't do.——And though I have been a good nurse in my day, I think she wants now a bit better Doctor than I be—and then if she could see the minister, to take the weight off her heart, to make her not fret so, to bid her look up above for comfort, and to raise her with the hope and trust, that God will have more mercy upon her than her father and mother do have . . . and to make her,—hardest of all!—forget him that has forsaken her and her little one, and been so cruel . . . Oh! ladies, to do all that needs a person that can speak to her better, and with more authority than I can."

The poor woman stopped again for some minutes, and then recollecting that she had not told what she had intended to tell, she said:

"I suppose, ladies, you guess now

how it be, and I ought to beg pardon for speaking of such a thing, or such a one as . . . as poor Kate is now, to you young ladies . . . but though she is fallen so low, and an outcast, she is not hardened . . . and if it had been so that it had pleased Heaven that she had been a wife to one in her own condition . . . Oh! what a wife, and what a mother there was lost in her!—The man that wronged her has a deal to answer for—but he has no thought of that, nor care for her, or his child—but is a fine man about Lon'on, they say, driving about with Colonels, and Lords, and dancing with ladies . . . Oh! if they saw Kate, one would guess they would not think so much of him . . . but yet, may be they'd think more . . . there's no saying how the quality ladies judge on these matters. —But this I know, that though he was very free of his money, and generous to Kate at the first, and even for some months after he quit the country, till I suppose he forgot her, yet he has not

sent her a guinea for self or child these four months, nor a line of a letter of any kind, which she pined for more, and we kept thinking the letters she did write, did not get to him by the post, so we sent one by a grandson of my own, that we knowed would put the letter safe into his hands, and did, just as the young gentleman was, as my grandson told me, coming out of a fine house in Lon'on, and going, with a long whip in his hand, to get upon the coach-box of a coach, with four horses too . . . and he looks at the letter, and puts it in his pocket, and calls to my boy—'No answer now, my good friend—but I'll write by post to her.' Those were the very words, and then that Colonel that was with him, laughing and making game like, went to snatch the letter out of the pocket, saying, 'Show us that love-letter, Buckhurst.' . . . . . Lord forgive me! What have I done now!"—said the old woman, stopping short, struck by the sud-

den change in the countenance of both her auditors.—

"Mr. Buckhurst Falconer is a relation of ours,"—said Rosamond, "and we are shocked!"

"Dear ladies, how could I think you knew him even?"—interrupted the old woman. "I beg your pardon, Kate says he's not so cruel as he seems, and that if he was here this minute, he'd be as kind and generous to her as ever . . . It's all forgetfulness just, and giddiness, she says . . . or may be, as to the money, that he has not it to spare."

"To spare!" repeated Caroline, indignantly.—

"Lord love her! what a color she has now—and what a spirit spoke there! —But, ladies, I'd be sorry to hurt the young gentleman, for Kate would be angry at me for that worse than at any thing . . . And as to all that has happened, you know it's nothing extraordinary, but what happens every day, by

all accounts, and young gentlemen, such as he be, thinks nothing of it . . . and the great ladies, I know, by what I noticed, when I was in sarvice once in Lon'on myself, the great ladies thinks the better of them for such things."

"I am not a great lady," said Caroline.

"Nor I, thank God!" said Rosamond.

—"Well, for certain, if you are not great, you're good ladies," said the old woman.——

As they were now within sight of their own house, they thanked and dismissed their loquacious, but kind-hearted guide, putting into her hand some money for poor Kate, Caroline promising to make further inquiries—Rosamond, without restriction, promising all manner of assistance pecuniary, medical, and spiritual.

The result of the inquiries that were made confirmed the truth of all that old Dorothy had related, and brought to

light other circumstances relative to the seduction and desertion of this poor girl, which so shocked Rosamond, that in proportion to her former prepossession in Buckhurst's favor was now her abhorrence; and as if to repair the imprudence with which she had formerly used her influence over her sister's mind in his favor, she now went as far on the opposite side, abjuring him with the strongest expressions of indignation, and wishing that Caroline's last letter had not gone to Buckhurst, that she might have given her refusal on this special account, in the most severe and indignant terms the English language could supply.

Mrs. Percy, however, on the contrary, rejoiced that Caroline's letter had been sent, before they knew any thing of this affair.

"But, Ma'am," cried Rosamond,—"surely it would have been right for Caroline to have given this reason for her refusal, and to have declared, that

this had proved to her beyond a possibility of doubt, that her former objections to Mr. Buckhurst Falconer's principles were too well founded—and it would have become Caroline to have written with strong indignation.—I am persuaded," continued Rosamond, "that if women would reprobate young men for such instances of proffigacy and cruelty, instead of suffering such conduct to go under the fine plausible general names of gallantry and *wildness*, it would make a greater impression, than all the sermons that could be preached.—And Caroline, who has beauty and eloquence, *can* do this with effect.—I remember Godfrey once said, that the peculiar characteristic of Caroline, that in which she differed most from the common herd of young ladies, is in her power of feeling and expressing virtuous indignation. I am sure that Godfrey, partial as he is to Mr. Buckhurst Falconer, would think that Caroline ought, on such an occasion, to set an example of that proper

spirit, which, superior to the fear of ridicule and fashion, dares to speak the indignation it feels."

"Very well spoken, and better felt, my dear daughter," said Mrs. Percy.—"And Heaven forbid I should lower the tone of your mind, or the honest indignation you feel against vice.—But, Rosamond, my dear, let us be just.—I must do even those, whom Godfrey calls the common herd of young ladies, the justice to believe, that there are many among them, who have good feeling enough to be angry, very angry with a lover upon *such an occasion*—angry enough to write him a most indignant, and, perhaps, very eloquent letter.—You may recollect more than one heroine of a novel, who discards a lover upon such a discovery as was made by you last night. It is a common novel incident, and, of course, from novels, every young lady, even who might not have *felt* without a precedent, knows how she ought to express herself in such circumstances.

But you will observe, my dear, that both in novels and in real life, young ladies generally like and encourage men of feeling, in contradistinction to men of principle, and too often men of gallantry in preference to men of correct morals.—In short, that such a character as that of Mr. Buckhurst Falconer is just the kind of person, with whom many women would fall in love.—By suffering this to be thought the taste of our sex, ladies encourage libertinism in general, more than they can possibly discourage it by the loudest display of indignation against particular instances.—If, like your sister Caroline, young ladies would show, that they really do not prefer such men, it would do essential service. And, observe, my dear Rosamond, this can be done by every young woman with perfect delicacy: but I do not see how she can, with propriety or good effect, do more. It is a subject ladies cannot well discuss; a subject upon which the manners and customs of the world are so

much at variance with religion and morality, that entering upon the discussion would lead to greater difficulties than you are aware of. It is, therefore, best for our sex to show their disapprobation of vice, and to prove their sense of virtue and religion by their conduct, rather than to proclaim it to the world. Had Caroline in her letter expressed her indignation in the most severe terms that the English language could supply, she would only have exposed herself to the ridicule of Mr. Buckhurst Falconer's fashionable companions, as a prating, preaching prude, without doing the least good to him, or to any one living."

Rosamond reluctantly acknowledged that "perhaps her mother was right."

"But, Caroline, how quietly you sit by, while we are talking of you and your lover!" cried Rosamond; "I do not know whether to be provoked with you, or to admire you."

"Admire me, pray," said Caroline, "if you can."

"I do not believe you will ever be in love," said Rosamond.—"I confess I should admire, or at least, love you better, if you had more feeling,"—added Rosamond hastily.

"By what do you judge that I want feeling?" said Caroline, coloring deeply —and with a look and tone that expressed her keen sense of injustice. "What proof have I ever given you of my want of feeling?"—

"No proof, that I can recollect," said Rosamond, laughing, "no proof, but that you have never been in love."

"And is it a crime never to have been in love? or is it a proof I am incapable of feeling, that I have never loved one who has proved himself utterly unworthy of my love—against whose conduct my sister cannot find words sufficiently severe to express her indignation?—Rosamond, if I had ever given him any encouragement, if I had loved him, what would have been my

misery at the moment you said those words?"

"Ah! my dear, but then if you had been very miserable, I should have pitied you so much, and loved you so heartily for being in love," said Rosamond, still laughing——

"Oh! Rosamond," continued Caroline, whose mind was now too highly wrought for raillery—"Is love to be trifled with?—no, only by trifling minds, or by rash characters, by those who do not conceive it's power, it's danger. Recollect what we have just seen.—A young beautiful woman sinking into the grave with shame—deserted by her parents—wishing her child unborn.—Do you remember her look of agony when we praised that child—the strongest charm of nature reversed—the strongest ties dissolved—and—love brought her to this!—She is only a poor servant girl. ——But the highest and the fairest, those of the most cultivated understand-

ings, of the tenderest hearts, cannot love bring them down to the same level, to the same fate?—And not only our weak sex, but over the stronger sex, and the strongest of the strong, and the wisest of the wise, what is, what has ever been the power, the delusions of that passion, which can cast a spell over the greatest hero, throw a blot on the brightest glory, blast in a moment a life of fame!—What must be the power of that passion, which can inspire genius in the dullest and the coldest, waken heroism in the most timid of creatures, exalt to the highest point, or to the lowest degrade our nature—the bitterest curse, or the sweetest blessing Heaven bestows on us in this life!—Oh! sister, is love to be trifled with?"—

Caroline paused, and Rosamond, for some instants, looked at her and at her mother in silence; then exclaimed—"All this from Caroline!——Are not you astonished, mother?"

"No," said Mrs. Percy, "I was aware that this was in Caroline's mind."

"I was not!"——said Rosamond, "She who never spoke of love!—I little imagined that she thought of it so highly, so seriously."

"Yes, I do think of it seriously, highly may Heaven grant!" cried Caroline, looking fervently upwards as she spoke with an illuminated countenance, "May Heaven grant that love be a blessing and not a curse to me!—Heaven grant that I may never, in any moment of selfish vanity, try to excite a passion which I cannot return! Heaven grant that I never may feel the passion of love but for one, whom I shall entirely esteem, who shall be worthy to fill my whole soul!"

"Mother!" continued Caroline, turning eagerly, and seizing her mother's hand—"My guide, my guardian, whenever you see in me any, the slightest inclination, to coquetry, warn me . . . as you wish to save me from that which I should most dread, the reproaches of my own conscience . . . . . in the first,

the very first instance, reprove me, mother, if you can . . . with severity.—— And you, my sister, my bosom friend, do not use your influence to soften, to open my mind to love; but if ever you perceive me yielding my heart to the first tenderness of the passion, watch over me, if the object be not every way worthy of me, my equal, my superior . . . . . Oh! as you would wish to snatch me from the grave, rouse me from the delusion—save me from disappointment, regret, remorse, which I know that I could not bear, and live."——

Her mother, into whose arms she threw herself, pressed Caroline close to her heart, while Rosamond, to whom she had given her hand, held it fast and stood motionless between surprise and sympathy. —Caroline, to whose usual manners and disposition every thing theatrical or romantic was so foreign, seemed, as soon as she recollected herself, to be ashamed of the excessive emotion and enthusiasm she had shown; withdrawing her hand,

from her sister, she turned away, and left the room.

Her mother and sister both remained silent for a considerable time, fully occupied with their own thoughts and feelings. The mother's reverie looked to the future prospects of her daughter;—confident in Caroline's character, yet uncertain of her fate, she felt a pleasing yet painful solicitude.

Rosamond's thoughts turned rather to the past than to the future; she recollected and compared words and looks, yet found insuperable difficulty in connecting all she had ever before known or fancied of Caroline, with what she had just seen and heard.—Rosamond did not fairly recover from her surprise, and from her look of perplexity, during a full hour that she remained absolutely silent, poring upon a screen, upon which she saw nothing.

She then went in search of Caroline, in hopes of renewing the conversation; but she found her busied in some of the

common affairs of life, and apparently a different person.

Rosamond, though she made divers attempts, could not lead Caroline back again to the same train of thought, or tone of expression. Indeed, Rosamond did not attempt it very skilfully, but rather with the awkward impatience of one not accustomed to use address.——Caroline, intent upon the means of assisting the poor young woman whom they had seen at the cottage, went there again as soon as she could, to warn old Dorothy, in the first place, to be less communicative, and not on any account to mention to any one else the names and circumstances which she had told them with so little reserve. Caroline next applied to Dr. Leicester, the vicar of their former parish, a most amiable and respectable clergyman, who had come from his vicarage, near Percy-Hall to spend what time he could spare from his duties with his favorite parishioners; at Caroline's request he willingly went to see this un-

happy young woman, endeavored, and succeeded in his endeavors, to sooth and tranquillize her mind by speaking to her words of peace. His mild piety raised and comforted the trembling penitent; and while all prospect of forgiveness from her parents, or of happiness in this world, was at an end, he fixed her thoughts on those better hopes and promises, which religion only can afford. Her health appeared suddenly to mend when her mind was more at ease: but this was only transient, and Dr. Erasmus Percy, to whom Caroline applied for his medical opinion, gave little hopes of her recovery. —All that could be done by medicine, and proper kindness, to assuage her sufferings during her decline, was done in the best manner by Mrs. Percy and her daughters—especially by Caroline.—The young woman, nevertheless, died in six weeks—and was buried without Buckhurst Falconer's making any inquiry concerning her—probably without his knowing of her death.—A few days after she

was no more, a letter came to her, from him, which was returned unopened by Dorothy, who could just write well enough to make these words intelligible in the cover.

"Sir,

Kate Robinson is dead—this four days—your child is with me still, and well—She bid me tell you, if ever you asked more concerning her—she left you her forgiveness on her death-bed, and hopes you will be happy, Sir.—

Your humble servant,

Dorothy White."

A bank-note of ten pounds was received by Dorothy soon afterwards for the use of the child, and deep regret was expressed by the father for the death of it's mother.—But, as Dorothy said—"that came too late to be of any good to her."

CHAPTER XIV.

SOON after the death of poor Kate, the attention of the Percy family was taken up by a succession of different visits; some from their old neighbors, and really affectionate friends; some from among the band of reproaching condolers. The first we shall mention, who partook of the nature of both these classes, was Lady Jane Granville. She was a sincere and warm friend, but a tormenting family adviser and director.

Her Ladyship was nearly related to Mr. Percy, which gave her, on this occasion, rights of which she knew how to avail herself.

To do her justice, she was better qualified to be an adviser and protector, than many who assume a similar tone and character.

Lady Jane Granville was of high birth and fortune, had always lived in good company, had seen a great deal of the world, both abroad and at home; she had a complete knowledge of all that makes people well received in society, had generalised her observations, and had formed them into maxims of prudence and politeness, which redounded the more to her credit in conversation, as they were never committed to writing, and could, therefore, never be brought to the dangerous test of being printed and published. Her Ladyship valued her own traditional wisdom, and oral instruction, beyond any thing that can be learned from books. She had acquired a *tact*, which, disclaiming and disdaining every regular process of reasoning, led her with admirable certainty to right conclusions in her own concerns, and thus in some degree justified the peremptory tone she assumed in advising others.

Though by no means pleased with Mr. and Mrs. Percy's answers to several

of her letters of advice, yet she thought it her duty, as a friend and relation, to persevere. She *invited herself* to the Hills, where, with great difficulty, through scarcely practicable cross roads, she arrived. She was so much fatigued and exhausted, in body and mind, that during the first evening she could talk of nothing but her hair-breadth escapes. The next morning after breakfast, she began with, "My dear Mr. Percy, now I have a moment's ease, I have a thousand things to say to you. I am very much surprised, that you have thought fit to settle here quite out of the world.—Will you give me leave to speak my mind freely to you on the subject?"—

"As freely as you please, my dear Lady Jane, upon any subject, if you will only promise not to be offended, if we should not coincide in opinion."

"Certainly, certainly; I am sure I never expect or wish any body to submit to my opinion, though . . . . . I have had opportunities of seeing something of the

world.—But I assure you, that nothing but very particular regard would induce me to offer my advice. It is a maxim of mine, that family interference begins in ill-breeding, and ends in impertinence, and accordingly it is a thing I have ever peculiarly avoided. But with a particular friend and near relation like you, my dear Mr. Percy, I think there ought to be an exception.—Now, my dear Sir, the young people have just left the room,—I can take this opportunity of speaking freely,—Your daughters—what will you do with them?"

"Do with them! I beg pardon for repeating your Ladyship's words, but I don't precisely understand your question."—

"Well, precise Sir, then, in other words, how do you mean to dispose of them?"—

"I don't mean to dispose of them at all," said Mr. Percy.—

"Then let me tell you, my good friend," said Lady Jane, with a most prophetic tone,—"let me tell you, that

you will live to repent that.—You know I have seen something of the world, you ought to bring them forward, and make the most of their birth, family, and connexions, put them in a way of showing their accomplishments, make proper acquaintance, and obtain for your girls what I call the patronage of fashion."

"Patronage!" repeated Mr. Percy, "it seems to be my doom to hear of nothing but patronage, whichever way I turn.—What! patronage for my daughters, as well as for my sons!"

"Yes," said Lady Jane, "and look to it,—for your daughters will never go on without it.—Upon their first coming out, you should ....." Here her Ladyship stopped short, for Caroline and Rosamond returned—"Oh! go on, go on, let me beg of your Ladyship"—said Mr. Percy—"why should not my daughters have the advantage of hearing what you are saying?"—

"Well then, I will tell them candidly, that upon their first *coming out* it will be an inconceivable advantage, whatever

you may think of it . . . . . to have the patronage of fashion.—Every day, we see many an ugly face, many a mere simpleton, many a girl who had nothing upon earth but her dress, become quite charming, when the radiance of fashion is upon them. And there are some people who can throw this radiance where and on whom they please;—just as easily," said Lady Jane; playing with a spoon she held in her hand, "just as easily, as I throw the sunshine, now upon this object, and now upon that, now upon Caroline, and now upon Rosamond.—And observe, no eye turns upon the beauteous Caroline now, because she is left in the shade."—

It was Mr. Percy's policy to allow Lady Jane full liberty to finish all she wished to say, without interruption, for when people are interrupted, they imagine they have much more to add. Let them go on, and they come to the end of their sense, and even of their words, sooner than they, or you, could probably expect.—

"Now," continued her Ladyship, "to

apply to living examples—You know Mrs. Paul Cotterel?"—"No"—"Well!—Lady Peppercorn?" "No"—"Nor the Miss Blissets?"—"No"—"That is the misfortune of living so much out of the world!—But there are the Falconers, we all know them at least—now look at the Miss Falconers."

"Alas! we have not the honor of knowing even the Miss Falconers," said Mr. Percy, "though they are our cousins."—

"Is it possible, that you don't know the Miss Falconers?"

"Very possible," replied Mr. Percy, "they live always in town, and we have never seen them since they were children,—except a visit or two which passed between us just after Mrs. Falconer's marriage, we know nothing even of her, though we are all acquainted with the Commissioner, who comes from time to time to this part of the country."—

"A very clever man the Commissioner is, in his way," said Lady Jane, "but nothing to his wife.—I can assure you, Mrs. Falconer is particularly well worth

your cultivating,—for unless maternal rivalship should interfere, I know few people in the world, who could be more useful to your girls, when you *bring them out*. She has a vast deal of address,—And for a proof, as I was going to point out to you, there are the Miss Falconers in the first circles,—asked every where—yet without fortunes, and with no pretensions beyond, or equal to, what your daughters have,—not with half Rosamond's wit and information—nothing comparable in point of beauty and accomplishments to Caroline; yet how they have *got on!*—See what fashion can do .... Come, come, we must court her patronage—Leave that to me .... I assure you I understand the ways and means."—

"I have no doubt of that," said Mr. Percy, "All that your Ladyship has said is excellent sense, and incontrovertible as far as ....."

"Oh! I knew you would think so, I

knew we should understand one another as soon as you had heard all I had to say."—

"Excellent sense, and incontrovertible, as far as it relates to the means, but perhaps we may not agree as to the ends; and if these are different, you know your means, though the best adapted for gaining your objects, may be quite useless or unfit for the attainment of mine."

"At once, then, we can't differ as to our objects, for it is my object to see your daughters happily married; now tell me," said Lady Jane, appealing alternately to Mr. and Mrs. Percy . . . "Honestly tell me, is not this your object—and yours?"—

"Honestly, it is"—said Mr. and Mrs. Percy.

"That's right——I knew we must agree there."

"But," said Mrs. Percy, "allow me to ask, what you mean by happily married?"

"What do I mean? Just what you

mean . . . what every body means at the bottom of their hearts—in the first place, married to men who have some fortune."

"What does your Ladyship mean by *some* fortune?"

"Why ..... you have such a strange way of not understanding.—We who live in the world must speak as the world speaks—we cannot recur continually to a philosophical dictionary, and if we had recourse to it we should only be sent from *a* to *z*, and from *z* back again to *a*; see *affluence*, see *competence*, see *luxury*, see *philosophy*, and see at last that you see nothing, and that you knew as much before you opened the book as when you shut it,—which indeed is what I find to be the case with most books I read."

Triumphant from the consciousness of having hitherto had all the wit on her side, Lady Jane looked round, and continued.——

"Though I don't pretend to draw my maxims from books, yet this much I do know, that in matrimony, let people have

ever so much sense, and merit, and love, and all that, they must have bread and butter into the bargain, or it won't do."

"Certainly," said Mrs. Percy, "under that head I suppose you include all the necessaries of life."

"And some of the luxuries, if you please, for in these days luxuries are become necessaries."

"A barouche and four, for instance?" said Mrs. Percy.

"Oh! no, no—my dear madam, I speak within bounds; you cannot expect a barouche and four for girls, who have nothing."

"I expect it, as little as I wish it for them," said Mrs. Percy, smiling—"and as little as my daughters, I believe, desire it."

"But if such a thing should offer, I presume you would not wish, that Rosamond or Caroline should refuse."—

"That depends upon *who* offers it," said Mrs. Percy,—"But whatever my wishes might be, I should, as I believe I safely may, leave my daughters entire-

ly at liberty to judge, and decide for themselves."—

"Yes, I believe you safely may," said Lady Jane, "as long as you keep them here.—You might as well talk of leaving them at liberty in the deserts of Arabia. You don't expect that knights and squires should come hither in quest of your damsels?"—

"Then you would have the damsels sally forth in quest of the knights and squires?" said Mr. Percy.

"Let them sally forth at any rate," said Lady Jane, laughing, "nobody has a right to ask in quest of what. We are not now in the times of ancient romance, when young ladies were to sit straight-laced at their looms, or never to stir farther than to their bower windows."

"Young ladies must now go a great deal farther," said Mr. Percy, "before the discourteous knights will deign to take any notice of them."

"Ay, indeed, it is shameful!" said Lady Jane, sighing. "I declare it is

shameful," repeated she, indignantly. "Do you know, that last winter at Bath the ladies were forced to ask the gentlemen to dance?"

"Forced?" said Mr. Percy.

"Yes, forced," said Lady Jane, "or else they must have sat still all night like so many simpletons."

"Sad alternative," said Mr. Percy; "and, what is worse, I understand that partners for life are scarcely to be had on easier terms, at least so I am informed by one of your excellent modern mothers, Mrs. Chatterton, who has been leading her three *gawky* graces about from one watering place to another these six years, fishing, and hunting, and hawking for husbands. 'There now! I have carried my girls to Bath, and to London, and to Tunbridge, and to Weymouth, and to Cheltenham, and every where; I am sure I can do no more for them!'—I assure you," continued Mr. Percy, "I have heard Mrs. Chatterton say these very words in a room full of company."—

"In a room full of company! Shock-

ing!" said Lady Jane. "But then poor Mrs. Chatterton is a fool you know, and what is worse, not *well mannered*—how should she? But I flatter myself, if you will trust me with your daughter Caroline, we should manage matters rather better.—Now let me tell you my plan—My plan is to take Caroline with me immediately to Tunbridge, previous to her London campaign. Nothing can be a greater mistake than to keep a young lady *up*, and prevent her being seen till the moment when she is to be brought out; it is of incalculable advantage, that previous to her appearance in the great world, she should have been seen by certain fashionable *prôneurs*. It is essential, that certain reports respecting her accomplishments and connexions should have had time to circulate properly."

All this Mr. and Mrs. Percy acknowledged, in as unqualified a manner as Lady Jane could desire, was fit and necessary to secure what is called a young lady's success in the fashionable world; but they

said, that it was not their object to *dispose of their daughters*, as it is called, *to the best advantage;* the arts which are commonly practised for this purpose they thought not only indelicate, but ultimately impolitic and absurd: for men in general are now so well aware of them, that they avoid the snares and ridicule, and detest those by whom they are contrived. If, now and then, a dupe be found, still the chance is, that the match so made turns out unhappily; at best attachments formed in public places, and in the hurry of a town life, can seldom be founded on any real knowledge of character, or suitableness of taste and temper. "It is much more probable," added Mrs. Percy, "that happy marriages should be made, where people have leisure, and opportunities of becoming really and intimately acquainted with each other's dispositions."

"Vastly well"—said Lady Jane—"so you mean to bury your daughters in the country—to shut them up, at least, all the days of their unfortunate lives."

Mr. and Mrs. Percy, both at the same moment eagerly declared, that they had no such absurd or cruel intention towards their daughters. "On the contrary," said Mr. Percy, "we shall take every proper occasion, that our present fortune and situation will allow, of letting them see agreeable and sensible persons."

"Are they to spring out of the ground, these agreeable, and sensible persons?" said Lady Jane; "Whom do you see in this desert, or expect to see?"

"We see your Ladyship in the first place," said Mr. Percy, "you cannot, therefore, wonder if we are proud enough, to expect to see sometimes good company, persons of merit, and even of fashion, though we have lost our station and fortune."—

"That is very politely turned by you, Mr. Percy.—Much more polite than my *desert*.—But I could not bear the thoughts of your sweet pretty Caroline's blushing unseen."

"Nor could we," said Mr. Percy, "bear the thoughts of her ceasing to blush from being too much seen.—We could not bear the thoughts of *fitting our daughters out*, and sending them to the London market, with the portionless class of matrimonial adventurers, of whom even the few that succeed are often doomed but to splendid misery in marriage; and the numbers who fail in their venture are, after a certain time, consigned to neglect and contempt in single wretchedness.—Here, on the contrary, in the bosom of their own families, without seeking to entice or entrap, they can at all events never be disappointed, or degraded, and, whether married or single, will be respected and respectable, in youth and age; secure of friends, and of a happy home."

"Happy nonsense! begging your pardon, my dear Coz.—Shall I tell you what the end of all this living in the bosom of their own families will be?—that they will die old maids. For mercy's

sake, my dear Mrs. Percy, do not let Mr. Percy be philosophical for your daughters, whatever he may be for himself.—You, I am sure, cannot wish your poor daughters to be *old maids*," said her Ladyship, with a tremendous accent upon the word.—

"No, I should wish them to marry, if I could ensure for them good husbands, not merely good fortunes. The warmest wish of my heart," cried Mrs. Percy, "is to see my daughters as happy as I am myself, married to men of their own choice, whom they can entirely esteem, and fondly love.—But I would rather see my daughters in their graves, than see them throw themselves away upon men unworthy of them, or sell themselves to husbands unsuited to them, merely for the sake of being *established*, for the vulgar notion of *getting married*, or to avoid the imaginary and unjust ridicule of being old maids."

The warmth and energy with which these last words were spoken, by so

gentle a person as Mrs. Percy, surprised Lady Jane so much, that she was silent; all her ideas being suddenly at a stand, and her sagacity at a fault.—Mr. Percy proposed a walk to show her the Hills; as her Ladyship rose to accompany him, she said to herself,

"Who could have guessed, that Mrs. Percy was so romantic?—but she has caught it from her husband.—What a strange father and mother!—But for the sake of the poor girls, I will not give up the point.—I will have Caroline with me to Tunbridge, and to town, in spite of their wise heads."

She renewed her attack in the evening after tea.—Rising, and walking towards the window.

"A word with you, Mr. Percy, if you please. The young people are going to walk, and now we can talk the matter over by ourselves."

"Why should not we talk it over before the young people?" said Mr. Percy. "We always speak of every thing openly

in this family," continued he, turning to Lady Jane, " and I think, that is one reason why we live so happily together. I let my children know all my views for them, all my affairs, and my opinions, I may say all my thoughts, or how could I expect them to trust me with theirs?"

" As to that, children are bound by gratitude to treat their parents with perfect openness," said Lady Jane, " and it is the duty of children, you know, to make their parents their confidants upon all occasions."

" Duty and gratitude are excellent things," said Mr. Percy, " but somewhat more is necessary between parent and child, to produce friendship. Recollect the Duc d'Epernon's reply to his king, who reproached him with want of affection. ' Sire, you may command my services, my life, but your Majesty knows, friendship is to be won only by friendship.' "

" Very true,"—said Lady Jane, " but friendship is not, properly speaking, the

connexion that subsists between parents and children."

"I am sorry you think so," said Mr. Percy, smiling—"pray do not teach my children that doctrine."

"Nay," said Lady Jane, "no matter whether we call it friendship or not; I will answer for it, that without any refined notions about perfect openness and confidence, your children will be fond of you, if you are indulgent to them in certain points. Caroline, my dear," said she, turning to Caroline, who was at the farthest end of the room—"Don't look so unconscious, for you are a party concerned; so come, and kneel at the feet of this perverse father of yours, to plead your cause and mine, I must take you with me to Tunbridge. Come, you must let me have her a summer and winter, and I will answer for Caroline's success."

"What does your Ladyship mean by my success?" said Caroline.

"Why child, ... now don't play

your father's philosophic airs upon me; we people who live in the world, and not with philosophers, are not prepared for such entrapping interrogatories. But come, I mean in plain English, my dear, though I am afraid it will shock your ears, that you will be (speaking loud) pretty well admired, pretty well abused, and oh shocking! .... pretty well married!"

"Pretty well married!" repeated Mrs. Percy, in a scornful tone, "but neither Caroline nor I should be satisfied, unless she be very well married."

"Hey day! There is no knowing where to have you *lady* philosophers.—This morning you did not desire a coach and four for your daughters, not you; now you quarrel with me on the other side of the question. Really for a lady of moderation you are a little exorbitant. *Pretty well married* you know implies £2,000. a year, and *very well married*, nothing under £10,000."

"Is that the language of the market?

I did not understand the exact meaning of *very well married* . . . . did you Caroline? I own I expect something more than £10,000. a year."

"More!—you unconscionable wretch! how much more?" said Lady Jane.

"Infinitely more," said Mr. Percy—"I expect a man of sense, temper, and virtue, who would love my daughter as she deserves to be loved."

"Let me advise you said Lady Jane, in her very gravest tone, "not to puff up Caroline's imagination with a parcel of romantic notions.—I never yet knew any good done by it. Depend on it you will be disappointed, if you expect a genius to descend from the clouds express for your daughters. Let them do as other people do, and they may have a chance of meeting with some good sort of men, who will make them as happy as . . . . as happy as their neighbors."

"And how happy is that?" said Caroline—"as happy as we are now?"

"As you are now?" said Lady Jane

—" a vastly pretty maidenly speech: but young ladies, nevertheless, usually think, that the saffron robe of Hymen would not be the most unbecoming dress in the world, and whether it be in compliance with their daughters' taste, or their own convenience, most parents are in a hurry to purchase it."

" Sometimes at the expense of their daughters' happiness for life," said Mrs. Percy.

" Well, lest we should go over the same ground, and get into the same labyrinth, where we lost ourselves this morning, let me come to the point at once.—May I hope, Mr. and Mrs. Percy, to have the pleasure of Caroline's company at Tunbridge next week, and in Town next winter, or not?—That is the question."—

" That is a question which your Ladyship will be so good as to ask *Caroline*, if you please," said Mr. Percy; " both her mother and I wish, that she should decide for herself."

"Indeed!"—cried Lady Jane—"Then, my dear Caroline, if you please, come with me this minute to my dressing-room, and we'll settle it all at my *toilette de nuit*. I have a notion," added her Ladyship, as she drew Caroline's arm within hers, and led her out of the room, "I have a notion, that I shall not find you quite so impracticable as your father has shown himself."

"You may leave us, Keppel,"—said Lady Jane, "to her maid, as she went into her dressing-room, I will ring when I want you.—My love," said she to Caroline, who stood beside her dressing-table, "why did not you let Keppel dress your hair to day?—But no matter, when I once get you to town, we'll manage it all our own way.—I have a notion, that you are not of a positive temper."

Caroline colored at this speech.

"I see what you are thinking of," said Lady Jane—mistaking her countenance—"and to tell you the truth, I

also am sadly afraid, by what I see, that we shall hardly gain our point—I know your father.—Some difficulty will be started, and ten to one he will not allow me to have you at last.—Unless you try and persuade him yourself."

"I never try to persuade my father to do any thing."

"What then, he is not a man to be persuaded?"

"No,"—said Caroline, smiling, "but what is much better, he is a man to be convinced."

"Better!" exclaimed Lady Jane—"Why surely you had not rather live with a man you were to convince, than one you could persuade?"

"Would it not be safer?" said Caroline, "the arts of persuasion might be turned against us by others, but the power of conviction never could."

"Now, my dear, you are too deep for me," replied Lady Jane.—"You said very little in our long debate this morning, and I'm afraid I said too

much; but I own I could not help speaking candidly.—Between ourselves your father has some notions, which, you know, are a little odd."—

"My father!" exclaimed Caroline.

"Yes, my dear, though he is your father, and my relation too, you know one cannot be quite blinded by partiality—and I never would give up my judgment."

"Nor would I," said Caroline. "Nor I am sure would my father ever desire it. You see how freely he permits, he encourages us all to converse with him. He is never displeased with any of us for being of a different opinion from his."

"He may not show displeasure," said Lady Jane.—

"Oh! he does not feel it, ma'am—I assure you,"—said Caroline, with emotion.—"You do not know my father, indeed you do not."

"My dear," said Lady Jane, retracting, "I know he is an excellent father,

and I am sure I would have you think so.—It is your duty.—But at the same time you know he is not infallible, and you must not insist," added she sharply, "upon all the world's being of one way of thinking.—My dear, you are his favorite, and it is no wonder you defend him."

"Indeed, ma'am," said Caroline, "if I am his favorite, I do not know it."

"My dear, don't mistake me.—It is no wonder that you *are*. You must be a favorite with every body—and yet," said Lady Jane—and she paused.—"As you hinted, perhaps I am mistaken .... I think Rosamond seems ... Hey? .... Now tell me candidly—which is the favorite?"

"I would if I knew,"—said Caroline.

"Oh! but there must be some favorite in a family.—I know there must.—And since you will not speak, I guess how it is. Perhaps, if I had asked your sister Rosamond to go to town with me

next winter, your father would have been better pleased, and would have consented more readily."

"To lose her company if she were his favorite?" said Caroline, smiling.

"But you know, my dear," continued Lady Jane, without hearing or attending to this.—"You know, my dear, that Rosamond, though a very good girl and very sensible, I am sure, yet she has not your personal advantages, and I could do nothing for her in town, except, perhaps, introduce her at Mrs. Cator's, and Lady Spilsbury's, or Lady Angelica Headingham's conversazione—. Rosamond has a mixture of naiveté and sprightliness that is new, and might *take*. —If she had more courage, and would hazard more in conversation, if she had in short, *l'art de se faire valoir*, one could hand her verses about, and get her forward in the bel-esprit line.—But she must stay till we have brought you into fashion, my dear, and another winter, perhaps . . . . Well, my love, I will not

keep you up longer.—On Monday, if you please, we shall go—since you say you are sure your father is in earnest, in giving you leave to decide for yourself."

What was Lady Jane Granville's astonishment, when she heard Caroline decline, with polite thanks, her kind invitation!

Her Ladyship stood silent with suspended indignation.

"This cannot be your own determination, child?"

"I beg your Ladyship's pardon—It is entirely my own. When a person is convinced by good reasons, those reasons surely become their own. But, independently of all the arguments which I have heard from my father and mother, my own feelings must prevent me from leaving home in our present circumstances.—I cannot quit my parents and my sister, now they are, comparatively speaking, in distress. Neither in prosperity nor adversity do I wish to leave my family, but certainly not in adversity."—

"High-flown notions!—your family is not in any great distress, that I see—there is a change to be sure in the style of life .... But a daughter more, you know, only increases the .... the difficulties."

I believe my father and mother do not think so," said Caroline, "and till they do, I wish to stay with them, and share their fortune, whatever it may be."

"I have done—as you please—you are to decide for yourself, Miss Caroline Percy—This is your final determination?"

"It is," said Caroline—"but permit me," added she, taking Lady Jane's hand, and endeavoring by the kindest tone of gratitude, to avert the displeasure which she saw gathering—"Permit me to assure you, that I am truly grateful for your kindness, and I hope .... I am sure, that I never shall forget it."

Lady Jane drew away her hand haughtily—"Permit me to assure you,

Miss Caroline Percy, that there are few, very few young ladies indeed, even among my own nearest relations, to whom I would have undertaken to be *chaperon*. I do not know another young lady in England, to whom I would have made the offer I have made to you—nor would that offer ever have been made, could I reasonably have foreseen the possibility of it's being refused.—Let us say no more, Ma'am, if you please, we understand one another now—and I wish you a good night."

Caroline retired, sorry to have displeased one who had shown so much friendly eagerness to serve her, yet not in the least disposed to change her determination. The next day Lady Jane's morning-face boded no good—Mr. and Mrs. Percy in vain endeavored by all the kind attentions in their power to assuage her feelings, but nothing restored her to that sweet temper, in which she had begun the chapter of advice—She soon announced, that she had received letters

which called her immediately to Tunbridge, and her Ladyship quitted the Hills, resolving never more to visit relations, who would not be guided by her opinion.

The next persons who came to visit the Percy family in their retirement, were Mrs. Hungerford, and her daughter Mrs. Mortimer, who had been friends and near neighbors whilst they resided at Percy-Hall, and whose society they had particularly regretted. The distance at which they now lived from Hungerford Castle was such, that they had little hope that any intercourse could be kept up with it's inhabitants, especially as Mrs. Hungerford had arrived at that time of life, when she was exempted from the ceremony of visiting, and she seldom stirred from home, except when she went to town annually, to see her daughter Mortimer.

"So,"—said Mrs. Hungerford, as Mr. Percy helped her out of her carriage—"my good friend, you are surprised at

seeing me, are you?—Ah! you thought I was too old, or too lazy to come,—but I am happy to be able to convince you, that you are mistaken. See what motive will do!—You know Mr. Percy says, that people can do any thing they please, and it is certain that it pleased me to do this."

When she was seated, and Mrs. Percy spoke of the distance from which she had kindly come to see them, she answered—

"I hear people talk of a *visiting distance*, and I understand perfectly well what it means when acquaintance are in question, but for friends there is no *visiting distance*. Remove to the Land's End, and, old as I am, I will pursue and overtake you too, tortoise as I seem.—And don't depend upon dark nights, for every night is full moon to me, when I am bent upon a visit to a friend—And don't depend upon Hills—There are no Pyrenees between us."—

These sound, perhaps, like mere civil

speeches, but they came from one who always spoke sincerely, and who was no common person. Mrs. Hungerford was, by those who did not know her, thought proud; those who did, knew that she had reason to be proud. She was of noble descent, dignified appearance, polite manners, strong understanding, and high character. Her fortune, connexions, various knowledge, and extraordinary merit, had, during a long life, given her means of becoming acquainted with most of the persons of any celebrity or worth in her own and in foreign countries. No new candidate for fame appeared in any line of life, without desiring to be noticed by Mrs. Hungerford; no traveller of distinction or of literature visited England, without providing himself with letters of introduction to Mrs. Hungerford, and to her accomplished daughter.

The wife of Admiral Mortimer——in her early youth she had passed some years abroad, and had the vivacity, ease,

polish, *tact*, and *esprit de société* of a Frenchwoman, with the solidity of understanding, amiable qualities, domestic tastes, and virtues of an Englishwoman. The mutual affection of this mother and daughter, not only secured their own happiness, but diffused an additional charm over their manners, and increased the interest which they otherwise inspired. They had a delightful society both in town and in the country. Mrs. Mortimer's house in London was the resort of the best company in the best sense of the word. It was not that dull, dismal, unnatural thing, an English *conversazione*, where people are set, against their will and their nature, to talk wit; or reduced, against their pride and their conscience, to worship *idols*.—This society partook of the nature of the best English and the best French society, judiciously combined. The French mixture of persons of talents and of rank, men of literature and of the world—the French habit of mingling feminine and

masculine subjects of conversation, instead of separating the sexes, far as the confines of their prison-room will allow, into hostile parties, dooming one sex to politics, argument, and eternal sense, the other to scandal, dress, and eternal nonsense.—Yet with these French manners, there were English morals—with this French ease, gayety, and politeness; English sincerity, confidence, and safety. —No *simagrée*, no *espionage*, no intrigue political or gallant; none of that profligacy, which not only disgraced, but destroyed the *reality* of pleasure in Parisian society, at it's most brilliant æra. The persons of whom Mrs. Mortimer's society was formed were, in their habits and good sense, so thoroughly English, that, even had it been possible for them to put morality and religion out of the question, they would still have thought it quite as convenient and agreeable to love their own husbands and wives, as to play at cross-purposes in gallanting their neighbors. In short, their

pleasure in general society was in addition, not in contradistinction or destruction of their domestic happiness. Of consequence, Mrs. Mortimer, in the bloom of youth and height of fashion, instead of being a coquet, hunting after men with her eyes, was beloved, almost to adoration, as a daughter, a wife, a mother, a friend.—Mrs. Hungerford, at an advanced age, was not a wretched, selfish Madame du Deffand, exacting *homage* and *attentions*, yet disbelieving in the existence of friendship: complaining in the midst of all the luxuries of life, mental and corporeal, of being oppressed by ennui, unable to find any one to love and esteem, or incapable of loving and esteeming any one.——Mrs. Hungerford, surrounded "with all that should accompany old age,"

"As honor, love, obedience, troops of friends,"

was, as she often declared, with gratitude to Providence, happier in age than

she had been even in youth. With warm affections, and benevolence guided and governed in it's objects by reason and religion.—Indulgent to human nature in general, and loving it, but not with German cosmopolitism; first and best, loving her daughter, her family, comprising a wide and happy extent of relations and connexions, sons and nephews in the army and navy, or in different employments in the state.—Many of these young men already distinguished, others wanting only opportunity to do equal honor to their name. All these objects of her affection kept up a continual, strong, and lively interest in the affairs of the world, connected her with different professions, and extended her views to distant countries, so that her affections enlarged perpetually her sphere of knowledge, and supplied that freshness of motive for mental activity, the want of which so many complain of as they advance in years.

During the summer, Mrs. Mortimer

usually spent some months at Hungerford Castle, and generally took with her from town some friends, whose company she thought would peculiarly suit her mother's taste. Mrs. Hungerford had always been in the habit of inviting the Percy family, whenever she had any body with her, whom she thought they would wish to see or hear; and thus the young people, though living retired in the country, had enjoyed the advantages of becoming early acquainted with many celebrated literary and public characters, and of living in the best society. These were advantages, which they obtained from their education and their merit, for assuredly Mrs. Hungerford would never have troubled herself with them, merely because they were her neighbors, possessing so many thousand pounds a year, and representatives of the Percy interest in the County.—A proof of which, if any were wanting, is, that she never took the least notice of those who now held their place at Percy-

Hall; and the first visit she paid when she came to the country, the first visit she had been known to pay for years, was to her friends the Percys, after they had lost their thousands per annum. So completely was it themselves and not their fortune, which she had always considered, that she never condoled with them, and scarcely seemed to advert to any change in their circumstances. She perceived, to be sure, that she was not at Percy-Hall; she discovered, probably, that she was in a small instead of a large room, the change of prospect from the windows struck her eye, and she remarked, that this part of the country was more beautiful than that to which she had been accustomed.—As to the more or less of show, of dress, or equipage, these things did not merely make no difference in Mrs. Hungerford's estimation of persons, but in fact scarcely made any impression upon her senses or attention. She had been so much accustomed to magnificence upon a large scale, that

the different subordinate degrees were lost upon her, and she had seen so many changes of fashion and of fortune, that she attached little importance to these, but, regardless of the drapery of objects, saw at once what was substantial and essential. It might, she thought, be one man's taste to visit her in a barouche and four, with half a dozen servants, and another person's pleasure to come without parade or attendants—this was indifferent to her. It was their conversation, their characters, their merit she looked to; and many a lord and lady of showy dress and equipage, and vast importance in their own opinions, shrunk into insignificance in the company of Mrs. Hungerford, and, though in the room with her, passed before her eyes without making a sufficient sensation upon her organs, to attract her notice, or to change the course of her thoughts.

All these *peculiarities* in this lady's character rendered her particularly agreeable to the Percy family in their

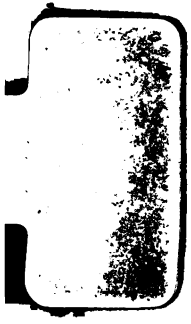
present circumstances. She pressed them to pay her a long visit.

"You see," said Mrs. Hungerford, "that I had the grace to forbear asking this favor, till I had possession of my daughter Mortimer, and could bring her with me, to entice you.—And, my dear young friends, you shall find young friends too, as well as old ones, at my house.—My nieces, the Lady Pembrokes, are to be with me; and Lady Angelica Headingham, who will entertain you, though, perhaps, you will sometimes be tired *for* her, she works so hard *aux galères de bel-esprit*. I acknowledge she has a little too much affectation.—But we must have charity for affectation and it's multitude of foibles, for, you know, Locke says, that it is only a mistaken desire to please.—Angelica will find out her mistakes in time, and after trying all manners, will hold fast by the best—that is, the most natural—in the mean time, do you, my dear girls, come and admire her as an

inimitable actress.—Then, Mr. Percy, I have for you three temptations, a man of letters—a man of science—and a man of sense.—And, for the climax of my eloquence, I have reserved," continued she, turning to Mrs. Percy, "my appeal to the mother's feelings.—Know, then, that my son, my eldest hope, my Colonel, has arrived from the continent —landed last night—I expect him home in a few days, and you must come and flatter me, that he is prodigiously improved by the service he has seen, and the wounds which he can show, and assure me, that, next to your own Godfrey, you would name my Gustavus, of all the officers in the army, as most deserving to be our Commander in Chief."

An invitation, which there were so many good and kind reasons for accepting, could not be refused.—But before we go to Hungerford-Castle, and before we see Colonel Hungerford—upon whom, doubtless, many a one at this instant, as well as Rosamond Percy, has formed

designs or prognostics in favor of Caroline .... we must read the following letter, and bring up the affairs of Alfred and Erasmus.

END OF VOL. I.

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